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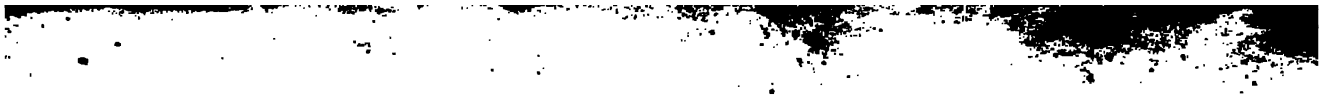

MEMOIR

OF

THE LIFE

OF

RICHARD HENRY LEE,

AND

HIS CORRESPONDENCE

WITH

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED MEN IN AMERICA AND EUROPE.

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THEIR CHARACTERS,

AND OF THE

EVENTS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

BY HIS GRANDSON

RICHARD H. LEE,

OF LEESBURG, VIRGINIA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:

H. C. CAREY AND I. LEA, CHESNUT STREET.

William Brown, Printer.

1825.

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Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the sixth day of September, SEAL. in the fiftieth year of the Independence of the United States of America, A.D. 1825, H. C. CAREY & I. LEA, of the said District, have deposited in this office the title of a Book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:

"Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee, and his Correspondence with the most distinguished Men in America and Europe, illustrative of their Characters, and of the Events of the American Revolution.—By his Grandson, Richard H. Lee, of Leesburg, Virginia. In two volumes. Vol II."

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned." And also to the act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, entitled, 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned,' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

D. CALDWELL,
Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

CORRESPONDENCE,

BETWEEN

GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON

AND

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, July 10, 1775.

Dear Sir—I was exceeding glad to receive a letter from you, as I always shall be whenever it is convenient, though perhaps my hurry, till such time as matters are drawn a little out of the chaos they appear in at present, will not suffer me to write you such full and satisfactory answers, or give such clear, and precise accounts of our situation and views, as I could wish, or you might expect. After a journey, a good deal retarded, principally by the desire of the different townships through which I travelled, and of showing respect to the general of your armies, I arrived here on this day week; since which I have been labouring with as much assiduity by fair, and threatening means, to obtain returns of our strength in this camp and Roxbury, and their dependences as a man could do, and never have been able to accomplish the matter till this day; now, I will not answer for the correctness of them, although I have sent several of the regimental returns back more than once, to have mistakes rectified. I do not doubt but the Congress will think me very remiss in not writing to them sooner, but you may rely on it yourself, and I beg you to assure them, that it has never been in my power till this day, to comply with their orders. Could I have conceived, that, that which ought, and in a regular army, would have been done in an hour, would employ

eight days, I should have sent an express on the second morning after I arrived, with a general account of things, but expecting in the morning to receive the returns in the evening, and in the evening surely to find them in the morning, (and at last getting them full of imperfections,) I have been drilled on from day to day, till I am ashamed to look back at the time which has elapsed since my arrival here. You will perceive by the returns, that we have but about 16,000 effective men in all this department, whereas, by the accounts which I received from even the first officers in command, I had no doubt of finding between 18 and 20,000; out of these there are only 14,000 fit for duty. So soon as I was able to get this state of the army, and came to the knowledge of our weakness, I immediately summoned a council of war, the result of which you will see, as it is enclosed to the Congress. Between you and me, I think we are in an exceeding dangerous situation, as our numbers are not much larger than we suppose, from the best accounts we are able to get, those of the enemy to be; their's situated in such a manner as to be drawn to any point of attack, without our having an hour's previous notice of it, (if the general will keep his own counsel,) whereas we are obliged to be guarded at all points, and know not where, with precision, to look for them. I should not, I think, have made choice of the present posts, in the first instance, although I believe, the communication between the town and country, could not have been so well cut off without; but, as much labour has been bestowed in throwing up lines, making redoubts, &c.; as Cambridge, Roxbury, and Watertown, must be immediately exposed to the mercy of the enemy, were we to retreat a little further in the country; as it would give a general dissatisfaction to this colony, dispirit our own people, and encourage the enemy to remove at this time to another place, we have for these reasons resolved in council, to maintain our ground if we can. Our lines on Winter and Prospect Hills, and those of the enemy on Bunker Hill, are in full view of each other, a mile distant, our advance guards much nearer, and the centries almost near enough to converse; at Roxbury and Boston neck it is the same. Between these, we are obliged to guard several of the places at which the enemy may land. The enemy have strongly fortified, or will in a few days, their camps and Bunker Hill; after which—and when their new landed troops have got a little refreshed, we shall look for a visit, if they mean, as we are told they do, to come out of their lines. Their great command of artillery, and adequate stores of powder, &c.

give them advantages which we have only to lament the want of. The abuses in this army, I fear, are considerable, and the new modelling of it, in the face of an enemy, from whom we every hour expect an attack, exceedingly difficult and dangerous; if things, therefore, should not turn out as the Congress would wish, I hope they will make proper allowances. I can only promise and assure them, that my whole time is devoted to their service, and that, as far as my judgment goes, they shall have no cause to complain. I need not tell you that this letter is written in much haste, the fact will sufficiently appear from the face of it; I thought a hasty letter would please you better than no letter, and, therefore, I shall offer no further apology, but assure you, that, with sincere regard, for my fellow labourers with you, Doctor Shippen's family, &c. I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. We want an hospital upon a proper establishment, much, and a proper director, with good surgeons to take care and charge of it. I cannot learn that these are to be provided here; it, therefore, rests with the Congress to consider of this matter. A Mr. Bass of Philadelphia, who, I am told, was in this way last war, can give you the proper establishment of one; I would not wish to see an expensive one set on foot, and I have no doubt of Doctor Shippen's recommending such gentlemen for surgeons as he can answer for the abilities of. Whether there is no news stirring, or whether we live out of the way of receiving it, I cannot tell, but so it is, that I have heard nothing of what the Parliament or ministry are about, since I left Philadelphia.

I am, as before, your serv't. G. W.

CAMP AT CAMBRIDGE, August 29th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the first instant, by Mr. Randolph, came safe to hand; the merits of this young gentleman, added to your recommendation, and my own knowledge of his character, induced me to take him into my family, as an aid-de-camp, in the room of Mr. Mifflin, who I have appointed quartermaster general, from a thorough persuasion of his integrity; my own experience of his activity; and, finally, because he stands unconnected with either of these governments; or with this, that, or t'other man; for, de-

tween you and me, there is more in this than you can easily imagine.

I submit it, therefore, to your consideration, whether there is, or is not, a propriety in that resolution of the Congress, which leaves the ultimate appointment of all officers below the rank of generals, to the governments where the regiments originated, now the army is become continental? To me it appears improper, in two points of view; first, it is giving that power and weight to an individual colony, which ought, of right, to belong only to the whole; and next, it damps the spirit and ardour of volunteers, from all but the four New England governments, as none but their people have the least chance of getting into office; would it not be better, therefore, to have the warrants which the commander in chief is authorized to give pro. tempore, approved or disapproved, by the Continental Congress, or a committee of their body, which I should suppose, in any long recess, must always sit. In this case every gentleman will stand an equal chance of being promoted, according to his merit; in the other, all offices will be confined to the inhabitants of the four New England governments, which, in my opinion, is impolitic to a degree.

I have not been unmindful of that part of your letter respecting Point Alderton; before the receipt of it, it had became an object of my particular inquiry, but the accounts of its situation differ exceedingly, in respect to the command it has of the ship channel; but my knowledge of this matter would not have been confined to inquiries only, if I had ever been in a condition, since my arrival here, to have taken possession of such a post; but you well know, my good sir, that it becomes the duty of an officer to consider some other matters, as well as a situation, namely—What number of men are necessary to defend a place—how it can be supported—and how furnished with ammunition. In respect to the first, I conceive our defence of this place (Point Alderton) must be proportioned to the attack of general Gage's whole force, leaving him just enough to man his lines on Boston and Charles Town Necks; and with regard to the second, and most important, as well as alarming object, we have only one hundred and eighty-four barrels of powder in all, (including the late supply from Philadelphia,) which is not sufficient to give twenty-five musket cartridges to each man, and scarcely to serve the artillery in any brisk action, one single day. Under these circumstances, I dare say, you will agree with me, that it would not be very

eligible to take a post thirty miles distant (by land) from this place, when we have already a line of circumvallation round Boston, of at least ten miles in extent, to defend; any part of which may be attacked, without our having (if the enemy will keep their own counsel) an hour's previous notice of it; and that, it would not be prudent in me to attempt a measure which would necessarily bring on a consumption of all the ammunition we have, thereby leaving the army at the mercy of the enemy, or to disperse; and the country to be ravaged and laid waste at discretion; to you, sir, I may account for my conduct, but I cannot declare the motives of it to every one, notwithstanding I know, by not doing of it, that I shall stand in a very unfavourable light in the opinion of those who expect much, and will find little done, without understanding, or, perhaps, giving themselves the trouble of inquiring, into the cause. Such, however, is the fate of all those who are obliged to act the part I do; I must, therefore, submit to it, under a consciousness of having done my duty to the best of my abilities.

On Saturday night last, we took possession of a hill, advanced of our lines, and within point blank shot of the enemy, on Charles Town Neck. We worked incessantly the whole night, 1200 men, and, before morning, got an intrenchment in such forwardness as to bid defiance to their cannon; about nine o'clock, on Sunday, they began a heavy cannonade, which continued through the day, without any injury to our work, and with the loss of four men only; two of which were killed through their own folly. The insult of the cannonade, however, we were obliged to submit to with impunity, not daring to make use of artillery on account of the consumption of powder, except with one nine pounder, placed on a point, with which we silenced, and, indeed, sunk, one of their floating batteries. This move of ours was made, to prevent the enemy from gaining this hil, and, we thought, was giving them a fair challenge to dispute it (as we had been told by various people who had just left Boston, that they were preparing to come out,) but, instead of accepting of it, we learn that it has thrown them into great consternation, which might be improved if . . . . the means of doing it. Yesterday afternoon, they began a bombardment, without any effect, as yet. As I expect this letter will meet you in Philadelphia, I must request the favour of you to present my affectionate and respectful compliments to Doctor Shippen, his lady and family, my

brothers' of the delegation, and any other inquiring friends; and, at the same time, do me the justice to believe that I am, with a sincere regard,

Your affectionate friend and ob't serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 29th October, 1775.

DEAR SIR—As you will be fully informed of every matter and thing relative to the army, by your own committee, I should not have given you the trouble of a letter at this time, were it not on Colonel Reed's account. He is, as I presume you may have heard, concerned in many of the principal causes now depending in the courts of Pennsylvania, and should those causes be pressed for trial by his brethren of the profession, it will not only do him a manifest injury in his practice and future prospects, but afford room for complaint, of his having neglected his business as a lawyer; this, he thinks, may be avoided, if some of you gentlemen of the Congress, in the course of conversation with the chief justice and others, would represent the disadvantages which must result to him, in case his causes should be hurried to trial. That Colonel Reed is clever in his business and useful to me, is too apparent to mention. I should do equal injustice, therefore, to his abilities and merit, were I not to add that his services here are too important to be lost, and, that I could wish to have him considered in this point of view, by your honourable body, when occasion shall favour. I shall take it kind of you, to give me, from time to time, such authentic intelligence of the manœuvres of ministry, as you think may be relied on. We get none but newspaper accounts here, and these very imperfect. I am, with sincere esteem and regard,

Dear Sir, your affectionate friend and countryman,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 8th November, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I mean but to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favour of the 22d ult. for as I expect this letter will be handed to you in Philadelphia, to recite the contents of my letter to the Congress, would be little more than idle repetition. I should be very glad, if the Congress would,

without delay, appoint some, mode by which an examination into the captures made by our armed vessels may be had, as we are rather groping in the dark till this happens. I sincerely condole with you on the loss of our good old speaker, and with respectful compliments to the good family you are in, your brother, &c. I remain, dear sir,

Your most affectionate humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Tell Doctor B. Shippen, that I was in hopes that his business would have permitted him to come here director of the hospital. Advices from England would be very agreeable—we have none here. G. W.

CAMBRIDGE, 27th November, 1775.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 13th, with the enclosures, (for which I thank you) came to this place on Wednesday evening; part of which, that is, the night, I was engaged with a party of men throwing up a work upon a hill, called Cobble Hill, which, in case we should ever be supplied with such things as we want, may prove useful to us, and could not be delayed, as the earth here is getting as hard as a rock; this, and the early departure of the post, prevented my giving your letter an answer the next morning.

In answer to your inquiries respecting armed vessels, there are none of any tolerable force belonging to this government. I know of but two of any kind—those very small. At the continental expense, I have fitted out six, per the enclosed list, two of which are upon the cruise, directed by Congress; the rest ply about capes Cod and Ann—as yet to very little purpose. These vessels are all manned by officers and soldiers (except perhaps a master, pilots, &c.); but how far, as they are upon the old establishment, which has not more than a month to exist, they can be ordered off this station, I will not undertake to say, but suppose they might be engaged anew. Belonging to Providence, there are two armed vessels; and I am told Connecticut has one, which, with one of those from Providence, is, I believe, upon the cruise you have directed.

I have no idea that the troops can remove from Boston this winter, to a place where no provision is made for them; however, we shall keep the best look out we can; and upon that, and every occasion where practicable, give them the

best we have. But their situation in Boston gives them but little to apprehend, from a parting blow, whilst their ships can move, and floating batteries surround the town.

Nothing of importance hath happened since my last. I am glad to find that our noble secretary has, at length, met with a check—was one of our bullets aimed for him, the world would be happily rid of a monster without any person sustaining a loss; this is my opinion at least. It gives me great pleasure to hear, that the Ohio Indians have entered into a firm treaty of friendship with us; for I had been informed that they were very restless, and had destroyed the houses, &c. upon the Great Kanhawa: and that the improvements which I had been making there to save my lands, valued at 1568*l.* 18*s.* 7½*d.*, were all destroyed—as far as they could be so by fire. The last I believe to be true, as I have it from Mr. L. Washington, who lives with me, (by the last post,) and who adds, that the Indians had also destroyed the fort which was built last year at the mouth of the Great Kanhawa. For God's sake, hurry the signers of money, that our wants may be supplied. It is a very singular case, that their signing cannot keep pace with our demands. I heartily congratulate you and the Congress on the reduction of St. John's: I hope all Canada is in our possession before this. No accounts from Arnold since those mentioned in my last letter to the Congress. Would it not be political to invite them to send members to Congress? Would it not be also political to raise a regiment or two of Canadians, and bring them out of the country? They are good troops, and this would be entering them heartily in the cause. My best regards to the good families you are with. I am very affectionately,

Your obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE, 26th December, 1775.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 6th instant, did not reach this place till Saturday afternoon. The money which accompanied it, came seasonably, but not (as it was so long delayed) in quantum sufficit; our demands at this time being peculiarly great for pay, and advance to the troops—pay for their arms—blanketing, &c.; independent of the demands of the commissary, and quartermaster general. Lord Dunmore's letters to General Howe, &c., which very fortunately fell into my hands, and enclosed by me to Congress, will let you

pretty fully into his diabolical schemes. If, my dear sir, that man is not crushed before spring, he will become the most formidable enemy America has; his strength will increase as a snow ball, by rolling: and faster, if some expedient cannot be hit upon, to convince the slaves and servants, of the impotency of his designs. You will see by his letters, what pains he is taking to invite a reinforcement at all events there, and to transplant the war to the southern colonies. I do not think that forcing his lordship on shipboard, is sufficient; nothing less than depriving him of life or liberty, will secure peace to Virginia; as motives of resentment actuate his conduct, to a degree equal to the total destruction of the colony. I fear the destination of the naval armament at P——, is too well known to answer the design. I have heard it spoken of in common conversation, at this place, near a fortnight ago; and the other day was told, that two men of war, going into the harbour of New York, (supposed to be those intended for the relief of the Asia,) were ordered, and accordingly sailed immediately out, and as it is imagined, for Virginia. My letters to Congress will give you the occurrences of this place; I need not repeat them, but I must beg of you, my good sir, to use your influence in having a court of admiralty, or some power appointed, to hear and determine all matters relative to captures; you cannot conceive how I am plagued on this head, and how impossible it is for me to hear and determine upon matters of this sort, when the facts, perhaps, are only to be ascertained at ports, 40, 50, or more miles distant, without bringing the parties here at great trouble and expense: at any rate my time will not allow me to be a competent judge of this business. I must also beg the favour of you, to urge the necessity of appointing a brigadier general to the vacant brigade in this army, the inconvenience we daily experience for want of one, is very great; much more than the want of a colonel to a regiment, for then the next officer in command does the duty; in a brigade this may not with propriety happen, and seldom or never is done with any kind of regularity. Perfectly indifferent is it to me whom the Congress shall please to appoint to these offices, I only want it done, that business may go regularly on.

I thank you for the letter enclosed (from Col. Pendleton), but the gentlemen were so long on the road, that I had more particular accounts of the transactions in Virginia before it came to hand.

My best respects to the good family you are in, and to

your brothers of the delegation, and be assured, that I am, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

When will the expresses between Philadelphia and this camp be established? Is it expected that letters to and from me, by the continental post are to pay postage? The information respecting Connelly's instructions being concealed in the tree of his saddle, may be relied on; it came to me from Mr. Atkinson, the midshipman who commanded the sloop coming to Boston and taken by us, and who was eye witness to the device, which he says was so well done, that he should not have been able to have discovered the place himself, wherein the instructions were secreted, without pulling the whole to pieces; he wishes that no use may be made of his name. I believe the intelligence was rather inadvertently communicated by Atkinson to Captain Matthews, who acquainted me of it yesterday.

CAMBRIDGE, 4th April, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 26th ult. came to my hands last night, by the post; but as I am upon the point of setting out for New York, (by the way of Providence and Norwich,) I can do little more than acknowledge the receipt of it, and thank you for the proceedings and ordinances of the Virginia Convention, which came safely to hand.

At present, the lakes are in an impassable state, neither being clear of ice, nor covered with such as will admit of transportation; at present, also, our troops are at different stages, on their march from hence to New York; nor is it possible for me, till I get there, as the Congress have annexed conditions to my sending the four battalions to Canada, to tell whether they can be spared or not, as I am unacquainted with the number of men, or strength of the works at that place. No time shall be lost in forwarding three battalions if there is a possibility of doing it with safety; as no person can be more sensible of the importance of securing Canada than I am. A letter of the 27th ult. from General Schuyler, informs me that there are many men now stopped at Albany, on account of the state the ice is in on the lakes. I thank you for your friendly congratulations on the retreat of the king's troops from Boston. It was really a flight; their embarkation was so precipitate; their loading so confused (after making greater havoc of the king's stores

than Dunbar did upon Braddock's defeat, which made so much noise,) that it took them eleven days to fit their transports, adjust the loads of them, and take in water from the islands in Nantasket Road, after they had fallen down there. The coast is now clear of them, except the Renown, (a 50 gun ship,) and one or two frigates, which remain here for the protection of such transports as shall be bound to this port. I pray you to make my best wishes acceptable to the good doctor, his lady, and family, &c. and believe me to be, as I really am,

Dear Sir, your affectionate and ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, May 18th, 1776.

My dear Sir—In great haste I write you a few lines to cover the enclosed; they came in the manner you see them, and as explained in Captain Langdon's letter to me. I hesitated some time in determining whether I could, with propriety, select them from the rest, considering in what manner they came to my hands; but as there are some things in each, which may serve to irritate, I concluded it best to send not only the one directed to you, but the other also, (to Doctor Franklin,) under cover to you, as you may communicate and secrete such parts as you like. I have no time to add the necessity of vigorous exertions; they are too obvious to need any stimulus from me. Adieu, my dear Sir.

I am, most affectionately, your ob't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Upon second thought, knowing that Doctor Franklin is in Canada, I send you a copy only of the letter to him, (which I take to be from Doctor Lee,) and the original to the Doctor.

MORRISTOWN, January 10th, 1777.

My dear Sir—Your last favour, by the purport of it, (having no date,) as also one or two others, at different periods, have come safe to my hands; and went unacknowledged from the hurried and distressed state of our affairs, and from the knowledge I had, that every occurrence, worth noticing, came regularly to you, in my letters to Congress.

I thank you, Sir, for the mention of Colonel Heartley, and finding, upon inquiry, that he is worthy of a regiment, I have sent him orders to raise one immediately. I shall, also, enclose Woffendall Kendall's letter to some officer to the southward, that his merit and services may not go unnoticed. My letters to Congress, containing every thing of a public nature that I could communicate in this, renders it unnecessary for me to add more than my compliments to our friends; my thanks for your kind wishes; and that I am, with affectionate regard,

Dear, Sir, your most ob't serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, March 6th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—I am anxious to know whether General Arnold's non-promotion was owing to accident or design; and the cause of it. Surely a more active, a more spirited, and sensible officer, fills no department in your army. Not seeing him then in the list of major generals, and no mention made of him, has given me uneasiness, as it is not to be presumed (being the oldest brigadier) that he will continue in service under such a slight. I imagine you will lose two or three other very good officers, by promoting your's, or any one's, over them. My public letters will give you the state of matters in this quarter, and my anxiety to be informed of the reason of Arnold's non-promotion, gives you the trouble of this letter, being, very sincerely, dear Sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, April 24th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—I have been favoured with two or three letters from you lately; the last that came to hand was without date, but contained an extract from Doctor Lee's letter to the secret committee, and the French general's ideas of the measures necessary for us to pursue in prosecuting the war with Great Britain: for both of which I sincerely thank you, as the communication of such matters cannot fail of having a proper tendency. That Great Britain will exert every nerve to carry her tyrannical designs into execution, I have not the smallest doubt; her very existence as a nation depends now upon her success: for should America rise triumphant in her struggle for independence, she must fall. It is not to be wondered at therefore, after she had departed from that

line of justice which ought to characterize a virtuous people, that she should descend to such low arts, and dirty tricks, as will forever remain a reproach to her; none of which has she practised with more success, and I fear with more dangerous consequences to our cause, than her endeavours to depreciate the continental bills of credit. Nothing therefore has a greater claim to the close attention of Congress, than the counteraction of this part of her diabolical scheme; every thing depends upon it.

The complexion of affairs in Europe, seems to indicate an approaching storm; but where, when, or on whom it may break, is not quite so clear, and ought not, in my judgment, to occasion the smallest relaxation in our preparations: for I profess myself to be of that class, who never built sanguinely upon the assistance of France, further than her winking at our supplies from thence for the benefits derived from our trade; and how far the meanness and offers of Great Britain may contravene this, time only can discover, and is somewhat to be feared. The plan drawn by the French general, is of such a nature, that it is impracticable to carry it into execution this campaign. It may, however, be kept in view, and the whole, or such parts of it adopted, as our circumstances, upon a full consideration of the matter, may hereafter admit. The great delay in appointing the general officers, the resignation of some of them, the non-acceptance of others, and I might add, the unfitness of a few, added to the amazing delay in assembling the troops, and the abuses which I am satisfied have been committed by the recruiting officers, (both of which ,consequences of the want of officers in that line, to superintend those duties in the respective states,) have distressed me and the service exceedingly; and will amply prove, what I foretold to Congress, that the pay of these officers, (for I could account for the delay of appointing them on no other principle) would be an ill-timed saving. Convinced I am, that thousands of pounds would have been saved to the public, if the measure had been adopted, upon, and at my first recommendation of it. But the extra expense is the smallest part of the evil. The backwardness we are in, in assembling the troops, is truly alarming; this however is not a singular instance, of our suffering by delay, in the adoption of measures, which were early recommended.

You are not aware of the evil consequences that would follow a general exemption of all persons concerned in iron works, from military duty; they are very numerous, and in this part of the country form a great majority of the people: besides, why should the iron-master carry on his trade with-

out restriction, when the farmer, equally useful for the support of the war, the shoemaker, and other manufacturers, absolutely necessary to the equipment of an army, may have their servants and apprentices taken from them at pleasure? One thing I have ever done, and it has, I believe, answered the end proposed by you; whenever an iron work has been employed *for the public*, I have desired the owner to give me a return of the number of men, and the names of those necessarily employed therein, and have exempted them from the duties of militia men in this state. This I have found necessary on two accounts: first, to secure such articles of manufacture as the army wanted; and next, to prevent numbers under this pretext from withholding their services in the military line, there being in this county (Morris) alone, between eighty and a hundred iron works, large and small.—Doctor Lee's opinion on the propriety of attacking the enemy upon their first arrival, (under a supposition of their being raw and undisciplined,) is certainly well founded, if our own circumstances will admit of it; but the doctor little apprehended, I believe, that we ourselves should have an army, at this late hour, to raise, of men equally raw, and officers probably much more so.

April 26.—Since writing the above, your favour of the 21st is come to hand, in consequence I send the enclosed; though I believe Baylor, and perhaps his corps of officers would as soon have had any other countryman among them as a S——n, not that I think this ought to be objected to him, if he is deserving in other respects. Please to make a tender of my compliments to your brother and other delegates from Virginia, and be assured, that I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. As General Arnold writes me that he is determined not to continue in service, (under the slight put upon him,) I could wish another brigadier was appointed for the state of Connecticut, (there being only one, Parsons,) and would recommend Colonel Huntington, who is the oldest colonel, a gentleman and a good officer, belonging to that state; as a piece of justice, and to prevent the loss of so good an officer, I could wish to see Arnold promoted to the rank of major general, and put in his proper place. It is by men of his activity and spirit the cause is to be supported, and not by H——h, Sp——b, &c.; out of all the brigadiers, appointed from Pennsylvania, I have not one to do duty. D.

Haas I cannot get up, or even an answer from him; Wayne is at Tyconderoga, but I have sent for him; the French general at Boston must take the third brigade of that state.

MORRISTOWN, May 10th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—This letter will be delivered to you, by the Chevalier Damremours, who, if I am not mistaken in my judgment, has something more in view than preferment. In the course of two days conversation with him, he appears to me, to be a man of superior abilities to the common run of his countrymen, who have visited us. He is sensible and judicious, and as far as I am capable of judging, well instructed in the political and commercial principles of most European states. He has letters of recommendation from Dr. Franklin, professes to be a warm friend to the rights of mankind, and, as such, ready to give any aid in his power to the cause we are engaged in. I mean this as a letter of introduction only, and am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

MORRISTOWN, May 17th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Under the privilege of friendship, I take the liberty to ask you, what Congress expects I am to do with the many foreigners they have at different times promoted to the rank of field officers? and by the last resolve, two to that of colonels. In making these appointments, it is much to be feared, that all the circumstances attending, are not taken into consideration. To oblige the adventurers of a nation which we want to interest in our cause, may be one inducement; and to get rid of their importunity, another; but this is viewing the matter by halves, or on one side only. These men have no attachment or ties to the country, further than interest binds them; they have no influence, and are ignorant of the language they are to receive and give orders in; consequently, great trouble, or much confusion, must follow. But this is not the worst, they have not the smallest chance to recruit others; and our officers think it exceedingly hard, after they have toiled in this service, and probably have sustained many losses, to have strangers put over them, whose merit, perhaps, is not equal to their own, but whose effrontery will take no denial.

The management of this matter, give me leave to add sir,

is a delicate point; for although no one will dispute the right of Congress to make appointments, every person will assume the privilege of judging of the propriety of them; and good policy, in my opinion, forbids the disgusting a whole corps to gratify the pride of an individual: for it is by the zeal and activity of our own people, that the cause must be supported, and not by a few hungry adventurers. Besides, the error of these appointments, is now clear and manifest, and the views of Congress evidently defeated; for by giving high rank to people of no reputation or service, you have disgusted their own countrymen; or, in other words, raised their expectations to an insatiable pitch. For the man who was a captain in France, finding another who was only a subaltern there, or perhaps nothing, appointed to a majority with us, extends his views instantly to a regiment; in like manner, the field officer can accept of nothing less than a brigade, and so on, by which means the man of real rank and merit, must be excluded, or perhaps your whole military system disordered. In the mean while I am haunted and teazed to death by the importunity of some, and dissatisfaction of others. My ideas, in this representation, does not extend to artillery officers and engineers. The first of these will be useful, if they do not break in upon the arrangement of that corps already established by order of Congress: the second are absolutely necessary and not to be had here. But proper precaution should be observed in the choice of them, for we have at present in pay, and high rank, two (Frenchmen,) who, in my judgment, know nothing of the duty of engineers. Gentlemen of this profession ought to produce sufficient and authentic testimonials of their skill and knowledge, and not expect that a pompous narrative of services, and loss of papers, (the usual excuse) can be a proper introduction into our army. The freedom, with which I have delivered my sentiments on this subject, will, I am persuaded, meet your excuse, when I assure you, that I have nothing else in view, than the good of the service. By the time, or before this letter can reach you, Congress will be visited by a person who *calls himself* Colonel Michael Fabricy a Kovatz, who according to his *own account* is a most valuable officer, from Prussia. What his credentials are, I know not, but from what little I have seen of him, they ought to be strong to convince me of his real importance, for if his conversations have been faithfully interpreted he has been caught tripping several times. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 22d May, 1777.

DEAR GENERAL—The subject of your letter of the 17th, is a very important one; and whilst it deserves the greatest attention, is certainly involved in great difficulty; of one truth, however, I beg you, sir, to be convinced, that no desire *to get rid of importunity* has occasioned these appointments, but motives military and political merely. These adventurers may be divided into three classes; some who came early, and without recommendation, but apparent zeal, with commissions, showing that they had been in service; others that brought with them recommendations from our good friend the Count D'Argou, general of Martinique, and from Mr. Bingham, the continental agent in that island; a third class includes those who came from France, generally under agreement with our commissioners, or one of them at least. The strongest obligations rest upon us (though the inconvenience is great) to make good engagements with the latter, and if the second had been disregarded, we might have offended a good and powerful friend in Martinique, who has done many good offices there; or have brought our agent into disrepute. Among the first class, I really believe there are many worthless men, and I heartily wish we were rid of them. All this is true, and yet I feel the great force of your reasoning, and the many difficulties in the way of providing for them properly, and that may be tolerably agreeable to them. It is of some consequence that we all, in our several departments, endeavour to smooth this rugged business as much as possible. When General Conway was appointed, I did hope, that as he knew most of them, and spoke both French and English well, he might relieve you from the greater part of this difficulty, for really, the discontented importunity of the greater part of these gentlemen is too much to be borne.

I will prevail with the committee for foreign applications to furnish you with the most explicit views of Congress, in every appointment, as well as with the recommendations under which each appointment was, and is made. We have written both to France and to Martinique to stop the further flow of these gentlemen here, and after the letters arrive, I suppose we shall have no more. Many of the last class, are, I believe, men of real merit, and if they will learn to express themselves tolerably in English, may be of service to the army. The desire to obtain engineers, and artillerists, was the principal cause of our being so overburthened. The first that came, had sagacity enough, quickly to discern our wants, and professing competency in these branches, they

were too quickly believed; and when our commissioners abroad (in consequence of their instructions,) inquired for those artists, military speculation was immediately up, and recommendations were obtained from persons of so much consideration in France, that the success of our applications, then made it quite necessary not to neglect them; and at this moment I am apprehensive, that the discontent of many, may injure our cause abroad, when we would wish it to stand well. As you express it, sir, the affair requires great delicacy in its management, as well on the account of our own officers, as on that of these foreigners.

CAMP AT MIDDLEBROOK, June 1, 1777.

DEAR SIR—By your favour of the 22d ultimo, I perceive my letter of the 17th, has been expressed in too strong terms. I did not mean by the words, "to get rid of importunity," to cast the smallest reflection; indeed the hurry with which I am obliged to write the few private letters I attempt, will not allow me to consider the force and tendency of my words; nor should I have been surprised, if the fact had really been so, if I am to judge of their, I mean foreigners' applications to Congress, by those to myself: for it is not one, nor twenty explanations, that will satisfy the cravings of these people's demands.

You will before this can reach you, have seen Monsieur D'Coudrey. What his real expectations are, and what his agreements with Mr. Dean, I know not; but I fear if his appointment is equal to what I have been told is his expectation, it will be attended with unhappy consequences. To say nothing of the policy of intrusting a department, on the due execution of which the salvation of the army depends, to a foreigner, who has no other tie to bind him to the interests of this country than honour, I would beg leave to observe, that by putting Monsieur D'Coudrey at the head of the artillery, you will lose a very valuable officer in General Knox, who is a man of great military reading, sound judgment, and clear conceptions. He has conducted the affairs of that department with honour to himself, and advantage to the public, and will resign if any one is put over him. My last return of the army will give you our strength, and show the state of the recruiting service, which seems to be at an end. The regiments of Pennsylvania indeed, appear to be growing worse, and unless some coercive method can be hit upon to complete the battalions, I see no chance of doing it. Gene-

ral Howe's encouragement, by proclamation, has occasioned great desertions from our army to his, with the loss of arms; this I have represented to Congress, and submitted to them the propriety of offering something back by way of counteraction, but have received no answer; and this being frequently the case, leaves me often in a very disagreeable state of suspense, from which a simple yea or nay, would relieve me.

If some effectual mode is not devised, to fill the regiments, it is impossible, at least very unlikely, that any effectual opposition can be given to the British army with the troops we have, whose numbers diminish more by desertion, than increase by enlistments. I have requested the director general of the hospital here (as it is properly within his line,) to take notice of the report, which you say prevails to the southward concerning the sick, and to remark upon it in the gazettes. I am with great regard and affection, dear sir,

Your most obedient,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CHANTILLY, in Virginia, January 2, 1778.

DEAR SIR—The enclosed came to my hand only a few days past, although from its date it appears to have been written long since; there are some useful suggestions in it, and therefore I send it to you. I do not know the writer's reason for dating it in April 1776, when from some parts in the body of the writing, it must have been written in the course of the year 1777. The arts of the enemies of America, are endless, but all, wicked as they are various; among other tricks, they have forged a pamphlet of letters, entitled letters from General Washington to several of his friends, in 1776, the design of the forger is evident, and no doubt it gained him a good beefsteak from his masters. I would send you this pamphlet, if it were not too bulky for the post, as it might serve to amuse your leisure hours during the inaction of winter. We hear, that Lord Cornwallis is gone to England, probably to encourage the hopes of administration, upon their sending out strong reinforcements in the spring. I am just informed from Williamsburgh, that the assembly have possessed the . . . . . and have voted two thousand men to be drafted from the single men, to fill up the regiments; also, ten regiments of volunteers to be quickly raised and marched to the army for six months. They have adopted a very extensive taxation, which will produce a large sum of money, and thereby produce the most salutary consequences. The

injury my health received at York, is not yet removed, but I hope to be in Williamsburg to assist in the Assembly, by the 12th or 14th of this month. I wish you the compliments of the season, and remain with true affection, dear sir,

Your's sincerely,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

VALLEY FORGE, February 15, 1778.

DEAR SIR—Your letter of the 2d ultimo, from Chantilly, enclosing Lieutenant Colonel Frazer's orders for the management of the grenadiers and light infantry in an action, and upon a march, came to my hands in the course of last month, and merits my thanks, as it may be of use to such corps, one of which (consisting of light infantry) we are now forming. The enemy are governed by no principles that ought to actuate honest men; no wonder then, that forgery should be amongst their other crimes. I have seen a letter published in a handbill at New York, and extracts of it republished in the Philadelphia paper, said to be from me to Mrs. Washington, not one word of which did I ever write; those contained in the pamphlet you speak of, are, I presume, equally genuine, and perhaps written by the same author. I should be glad however to see and examine the texture of them, if a favourable opportunity to send them should present.

Lord Cornwallis has certainly embarked for England, but with what view is not so easy to determine: he was eye witness a few days before his departure, to a scene not a little disgraceful to the pride of British valour, in their manœuvre to Chesnut hill, and precipitate return, after boasting their intentions of driving us beyond the mountains.

I am very glad to find that the Assembly of Virginia, have taken matters up so spiritedly; but wish, instead of attempting to raise so many volunteers, they had resolved at all adventures, to complete their regiments by drafting. If all the states would do this, and fall upon ways and means to supply their troops with comfortable clothing upon moderate terms, and Congress would make the commissions of officers of some value to them, every thing would probably go well, making at the same time some reform in the different departments of the army; nothing standing in greater need of it than the quartermasters and commissaries, as no army ever suffered more by their neglects; the consequences of this neglect are much to be dreaded.

I am dear Sir, your most obdt. servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

YORK, 24th June, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I should, long since, have answered your favour of the 25th of May, had it been worth while, (for any thing I had to communicate,) to interrupt your attention from the important affairs with which you are surrounded. It is, indeed, more from motives of complaisance than any thing else, that I now write; but I cannot help congratulating you, sir, on the enemy's abandoning Philadelphia, because, let their motives be what they may, this step evidently proves their prospect of conquest here is vanished. I fancy General Clinton's future operations depend much upon the chapter of accidents. A French war being avoided, efforts will continue to be exerted, for some time, against us; but a foreign war must of necessity carry this army to secure the now defenceless islands, of Great Britain, in the West Indies. A war with France, in the better days of England, would instantly have followed the message of Marquis de Noailles, but the mean and wicked determination to enslave America, removes all thoughts of every thing, but the accomplishment of their favourite object. The British king's message to his Parliament, although it shows mortified pride, and strong sense of insult, yet it clearly marks indecision and doubt about the propriety of resenting the affront. We see, by a publication of the enemy, in the Newport paper, that there is a great probability of Spain having acknowledged the independence of these states, and joined in our alliance. The ambassadors of Spain and of Great Britain, were on the point of returning each to his respective country; of this event taking place I had no doubt, so soon as the plate fleet should have reached Old Spain. Should Great Britain be engaged in war with the Bourbon family, it will furnish us an opportunity of pushing the former quite off this northern continent, which will secure to us peace for a century, instead of war in seven years, which the British possession of Canada, New South Wales, and the Floridas, will inevitably produce. You have, no doubt, heard, sir, that our last Assembly have voted 2,000 infantry to join the army, and a sum of money to forward Gen. Nelson's cavalry; the latter may soon be expected at head quarters. I am, with sincere esteem, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate and ob't serv't.

R. H. LEE.

WHITE PLAINS, August 10th, 1778.

DEAR SIR—A few days ago, I received your favour of the 26th ult. enclosing one from Colonel Spotswood, for which I thank you. The reputation which this gentleman had acquired, of being an attentive officer and good disciplinarian, was justly founded; and I consider his leaving the army a loss to the service. The supposed death of his brother, it is natural to believe, had a painful influence upon his mind; but he had long before been very uneasy in his situation, on account of the determination in the case between him and Colonel M'Clanahan, (and, I am persuaded, was only prevented from quitting the line in consequence, through my means); my regard for Colonel Spotswood, and the opinion I entertain of him as an officer, would induce me to interest myself in his favour, whenever I could with propriety. In the present instance, however, I cannot, because I think I should do an injury to the officers of the Virginia line, (if not to those of the line at large,) and because I am convinced his promotion would excite infinite discontents, and produce many resignations. When he left camp, in the month of October, he made a surrender of his commission to me, according to the prevailing custom; this was accepted, and a new arrangement took place among the field officers. After this, I could not suppose him to continue in the line; and to attempt to recall the rise of the officers, to give him a place again, would be to attempt an impossibility. No reasoning upon the subject would be sufficient to get them to consent to it. With respect to the report of the board of general officers, to which you allude, you will excuse me when I say, in my opinion, it will not apply. The case there was, that sundry inferior officers, or juniors, of the same rank, from local circumstances, and the opportunities of application, obtained from the committees, or councils of the states, in whom the power, of appointing officers to the army for 1777, was vested, new commissions, prior in date to those granted afterwards to their seniors; and, in consequence, claimed a right to rank before them. The board determined their claims unjust; and, that the rank which the officers immediately held before their new commissions, should govern, as it did not appear that the councils intended to supercede the senior officers. But here there had been no interruption or relinquishment of the right to rank by resignation, surrender of commission, or any other act of the parties. Nor could I ever think that Colonel Spotswood had cause to complain of the decision on the point in question, between him

and Colonel M'Clanahan. It was founded on the practice which had commonly prevailed—I believe universally, in like cases, viz:—that when state officers became continental, they should rank, with respect to each other, according to their state precedence. This principle appeared to be just, and, I am certain, was the only one, that could be adopted, to give general satisfaction. As many of our regiments in the first instance, and particularly those from Virginia, were raised by the states, without any order by Congress, a contrary rule would have involved great inconveniences; and would have proved an effectual bar, to many valuable officers, coming into service. I have not the most distant suspicion, that Colonel Spotswood is influenced in his wishes, upon the present occasion, in the smallest degree, by any considerations arising from the half pay establishment. I am convinced that he is not; nor do I believe that any officer will impute a matter of the sort to him, or object to his being reintroduced into the line from motives of personal dislike; they will oppose it as an injury to their rights. I thank you much for your congratulations; the prospect we have before us is certainly pleasing, and such as promises a glorious and happy issue to all our struggles. Success in the intended enterprise against Rhode Island, would operate powerfully, I should suppose, upon the minds of the British nation, and bring matters to a speedy conclusion. I wait impatiently to hear from them. I am, dear Sir,

Your most ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

FREDERICKSBURG, in the state of New York, Sept. 23, 1778.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 6th instant, did not get to my hands till the 18th, it found me at our posts in the highlands, on my circuit to this place, and at a time when I had neither leisure nor opportunity to write to you. I am so thoroughly impressed with the necessity of re-enlisting the army, that you may depend upon it, nothing in my power to effect it shall be left unessayed. Instructions and money are in the hands of every brigade for this purpose; and I have directed weekly returns to be made of the progress. An advance in silver dollars, of part of the bounty money, might facilitate the business of recruiting; but I conceive that it would be attended with very pernicious consequences; not from the cause you speak of, to wit, discontenting the other soldiers, but another source, namely, opening the eyes of the whole,

and setting them to reasoning upon the difference between specie and paper. At present, they know that every comfort and necessary of life is insufferably dear, but do not inquire much after the causes; and having no specie among them, to fix the comparison, do not attribute it to the depreciation of the paper money: but let them have ocular proof, that they can purchase as much with one silver, as with four or five paper dollars, and have forestallers, and the disaffected at work among them, in purchasing up the specie, while the latter class of people are painting in lively colours the difference, and using at the same time every art in their power to poison the minds, and sow the seeds of discontent, and then judge of the event—at any rate I think the experiment would be dangerous, and ought not to be tried, but as the dernier resort, lest by obviating one evil, a greater be involved. The designs of the enemy, to me, are mysterious, indeed totally incomprehensible—that they are preparing for some grand manœuvre does not admit of a doubt; but whether it is for an operation on the North River, against the French squadron at Boston (by a junction of their land and sea forces,) or a total or partial evacuation of the United States, is not easy to discover. I believe, myself, that they are waiting orders; which, probably, will arrive in the August packet, to determine their plan; and in the mean while are preparing to remove wholly, or in part, as they shall be directed; but as their motives are equivocal, and will apply to either of the above cases, I have strengthened the posts in the highlands, and thrown the army into such a position as to reinforce them readily, at the same time that we are advanced to the eastward, and can move on in different columns, by different routs, if the operations of the enemy should call us to that quarter.

I am dear Sir, your most obedt. humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. I think it likely that Mr. Custis, (and Colonel Bassett) may be in Philadelphia, at the time this letter may come to your hands; if so, I will thank you for causing to be delivered to him, a letter herewith addressed to your care.

Yours, G. W.

HEAD QUARTERS, Middle Brook, May 5th, 1779.

GENTLEMEN—I have the honour to transmit to your care an open letter for Brigadier General Scott, by which you

will perceive, that I have directed the levies in Virginia, to be formed into three battalions, and to be officered and marched under his command, to reenforce the southern army, as soon as circumstances will possibly permit.

I give you this trouble, lest these directions should interfere with any arrangements you may have made, and that they may be added to, or altered, if you should think it expedient in any point. The sooner the letter can reach General Scott, the better; he will be, it is probable, either at Alexandria or Fredericksburg, but the express who carries it, should be directed to proceed with it till he finds him. I beg leave to mention the subject of arms again, and persuade myself the committee will cause every proper measure to be pursued for supplying those levies with all possible expedition. Such of the officers as are mentioned in the list contained in the letter to General Scott, who are in camp, will proceed to Virginia without delay; I make no doubt the committee have given orders respecting Bland's and Baylor's regiments, if they choose that they should go. I have the honour to be with great respect, gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

Hon. R. H. Lee, Henry Lawrence, and Thomas Burke, Esq's.

MOUNT VERNON, 12th June, 1784.

Dear Sir—Unsolicited by, and unknown to Mr. Paine, I take the liberty of hinting the services, and distressed (for so I think it may be called,) situation of that gentleman. That his Common Sense, and many of his Crises, were well-timed and had a happy effect upon the public mind, none I believe, who will recur to the epochas at which they were published, will deny. That his services hitherto have passed off unnoticed, is obvious to all; and that he is chagrined and necessitous, I will undertake to aver: does not common justice then point to some compensation. He is not in circumstances to refuse the bounty of the public; New York, not the least distressed, nor most able state in the Union, has set the example. He prefers the benevolence of the states individually to an allowance from Congress, for reasons which are conclusive in his own mind, and such as I think may be approved by others. His views are moderate, a decent independency is, I believe, the height of his ambition; and if you view his services in the American cause, in the

same important light that I do, I am sure you will have pleasure in obtaining it for him. I am, with esteem and regard, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

MOUNT VERNON, December 14th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—The letter which you did me the honour to write to me, on the 20th of last month, only came to my hands by the post preceding the date of this. For the copy of the treaty held with the Six Nations, at fort Stanwix, you will please to accept my thanks. These people have given, I think, all that the United States could reasonably have asked of them: more, perhaps, than the state of New York conceives ought to have been required from them, by any other than their own legislature.

I wish they were better satisfied; individual states opposing the measures of the United States, encroaching upon the territory of one another, and setting up old and obsolete claims, is verifying the predictions of our enemies; and, in reality, is truly unfortunate. If the western tribes are as well disposed to treat with us as the northern Indians have been, and will cede a competent district of country north west of the Ohio, to answer our present purposes, it would be a circumstance as unexpected as pleasing to me; for it was apprehended, if they agreed to the latter at all, it would be reluctantly; but the example of the Six Nations, who, (if they have not relinquished their claim,) have pretensions to a large part of those lands, may have a powerful influence on the western gentry, and smooth the way for the commissioners, who have proceeded to fort Pitt.

It gave me pleasure to find, by the last gazettes, that a sufficient number of states had assembled to form a Congress; and that you had been placed in the chair of it. On this event, permit me to offer my compliments of congratulation. To whatever causes the delay of this meeting may have been ascribed, it most certainly has an unfavourable aspect; contributes to lessen—already too low—the dignity and importance of the federal government; and is hurtful to our national character in the eyes of Europe.

It is said (how founded I know not) that our Assembly have repealed their former act respecting British debts. If this be true, and the state of New York have not acted repugnant to the terms of the treaty, the British government

can no longer hold the western posts under that cover; but I shall be mistaken if they do not entrench themselves behind some other expedient, to retain them; or will appoint a time for surrendering them, of which we cannot avail ourselves; the probable consequences whereof will be the destruction of the works.

The assemblies of Virginia and Maryland have now under consideration, the extension of the inland navigation of the rivers Potomac and James; and opening a communication between them and the western waters. They seem fully impressed with the political, as well as the commercial, advantages, which would result from the accomplishment of these great objects; and, I hope, will embrace the present moment to put them in a train for execution. Would it not, at the same time, be worthy the wisdom and attention of Congress to have the western waters well explored; the navigation of them fully ascertained; accurately laid down; and a complete and perfect map made of the country; at least as far westerly as the Miamies, running into the Ohio and lake Erie; and to see how the waters of these communicate with the river St. Joseph, which empties into the lake Michigan, and with the Wabash? for I cannot forbear observing that the Miami village, in Hutchins' map, if it and the waters are laid down with accuracy, points to a very important post for the union. The expense attending such an undertaking could not be great; the advantages would be unbounded; for sure I am, nature has made such a display of her bounties in those regions, that the more the country is explored, the more it will rise in estimation; consequently, greater will the revenue be to the union.

Would there be any impropriety, do you think, sir, in reserving for special sale, all mines, minerals, and salt springs, in the general grants of land from the United States? The public, instead of the few knowing ones, might, in that case, receive the benefits which would proceed from the sale of them, without infringing any rule of justice that occurs to me, or their own laws; but, on the contrary, inflict just punishment upon those, who, in defiance of the latter, have dared to create enemies to disturb the public tranquillity, by roaming over the country, marching and surveying the valuable spots in it, to the great disquiet of the western tribes of Indians, who have viewed these proceedings with jealous indignation. To hit upon a happy medium price for the western lands, for the prevention of monopoly on one hand, and not discouraging useful settlers on the other, will, no doubt, require consideration; but ought not, in my opinion, to employ too

much time before the terms are announced. The spirit of emigration is great. People have got impatient; and though you cannot stop the road, it is yet in your power to mark the way; a little while, and you will not be able to do either. It is easier to prevent than to remedy an evil. I shall be very happy in the continuation of your correspondence; and, with sentiments of great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

Your most ob't humble serv't.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

RICHARD H. LEE, Esquire.

MOUNT VERNON, February 8th, 1785.

DEAR SIR—Since my last, I have had the honor to receive your favours of the 26th of December, and 16th of January. I have now the pleasure to inform you, that the Assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, have enacted laws for improving and extending the navigation of the Potomac, of which the enclosed is a copy; they are exactly similar in both states. At the same time, and at the joint and equal expense of the two governments, the sum of 6,666 2-3 dollars, are voted for opening, and keeping in repair, a road from the highest practicable navigation of this river, to that of the river Cheat, or Monongahela, as commissioners (who are appointed to survey and lay out the same) shall judge most convenient and beneficial to the western settlers; and have concurred in an application to the state of Pennsylvania, for permission to open another road from fort Cumberland to the Youghioany, at the three forks, or Turkey foot.

A similar bill to the one enclosed, is passed by our Assembly, respecting the navigation of James river, and the communication between it and the waters of the great Kanhawa; and the executive is authorized, by a resolve, to appoint commissioners to examine and report the most convenient course for a canal between Elizabeth river and the waters of Roanoke, with an estimate of the expense; and if the best communication should be found to require the concurrence of the state of North Carolina thereto, to make application to the legislature thereof, accordingly.

Towards the latter part of the year 1783, I was honoured with a letter from the countess of Huntingdon, briefly reciting her benevolent intention of spreading Christianity among the tribes of Indians inhabiting our western territory, and expressing a desire that my advice and assistance might be afforded her to carry this charitable design into execution.

I wrote her ladyship for answer, that it would by no means comport with the plan of retirement I had promised myself, to take an active or responsible part in this business; and that it was my belief there would be no other way to effect her pious and benevolent design, but by first reducing these people to a state of greater civilization; but that I would give every aid in my power, consistent with that ease and tranquillity I meant to seek, for the remainder of my life, to facilitate her views. Since this, I have been favoured with other letters from her, and a few days ago, under cover from Sir James Jay, I received the papers herewith enclosed; as the plan contemplated by Lady Huntingdon, according to the outlines exhibited, is not only unexceptionable in its design and tendency, but has humanity and charity for its object, and may, as I conceive, be made subservient to valuable political purposes, I take the liberty of laying the matter before you, for your free and candid sentiments thereon. The communication I make of this matter to you, sir, is in a private way; but you are at full liberty to communicate the plan of Lady Huntingdon to the members individually, or officially to Congress, as the importance and propriety of the measure may strike you. My reasons for it are these: First, I do not believe that any of the states to whom she has written (unless it may be New-York) are in circumstances, since their cession of territory, to comply with the requisitions respecting emigration; for it has been privately hinted to me (and ought not to become a matter of public notoriety) that, notwithstanding the indefinite expressions of the address, respecting the numbers or occupations of the emigrants (which was purposely omitted to avoid giving alarm in England) the former will be great, and the useful artizans among them many. Next, because such emigration, if it should accomplish the object in view, besides the humane and charitable purposes which would thereby be answered, would be of immense political consequence; and even if this should not succeed to her ladyship's wishes, it must nevertheless be of considerable importance, from the increase of population by orderly and well disposed characters, who would at once form a barrier, and attempt the conversion of the savages without any expense to the Union. I see but one objection to a compact, unmixed, and powerful settlement of this kind, (if it should ever become so) the weight of which you will judge of: it is (and her ladyship seems to have been aware of it, and endeavours to guard against it) placing a people, in a body, upon our exteriour, contiguous to Canada, who may bring with them strong prejudices against us and our forms of govern-

ment, and equally strong attachments to the country and constitution they leave, without the means, being detached and unmixed with citizens of different sentiments, of having them eradicated.

Her ladyship has spoken so sensibly and feelingly on the religious and benevolent purposes of the plan, that no language, of which I am possessed, can add aught to enforce her observations; and no place, in my opinion, bids so fair to answer her views as that spot, in Hutchins' map, marked Miami village and fort; from hence there is a communication to all parts by water, and at which, in my judgment, there ought to be a post. Do not think it strange, my good sir, that I send you the original papers from Lady Huntingdon. Many, mistakingly, think I am retired to ease and that kind of tranquillity which would grow tiresome for want of employment; but at no period of my life, not in the eight years I served the public, have I been *obliged* to write so much *myself*, as I have done since my retirement. Was this confined to friendly communications, and to my own business, it would be equally pleasing and trifling; but I have a thousand references of old matters with which I ought not to be troubled, but which, nevertheless, must receive some answer. These, with applications for certificates, copies of papers, &c. &c. &c., deprive me of my usual and necessary exercise. I have tried to get a secretary or clerk to take the drudgery of this business off my hands, but hitherto in vain. That you might not wonder at my parting with original papers, upon an interesting subject, I thought it incumbent on me to assign the reason, but I pray *you* to be *assured* that I have no other motive for it.

Please to accept my thanks for the pamphlet you sent me, and the resolutions respecting the temporary and permanent residence of Congress. If I might be permitted to hazard an opinion of the latter, I would say that, by the time your federal buildings on the banks of the Delaware (in the point of a triangle when compared to the shape and extent of the confederated states,) are fit for the reception of Congress, it will be found that they are very inconveniently placed for the seat of the empire, and will have to undergo a *second* edition in one more convenient. If the union continues and this is not the case, I will agree to be placed amongst the false prophets and suffer for evil predictions.

The letter which went under cover of my former, and which arrived too late for the Marquis de la Fayette, I pray you to

forward to him by the packet. With great esteem and regard,

I have the honour to be,
Dear sir,
Your most humble and obedient servant,
GEO: WASHINGTON.

His Excellency, R. H. Lee.

MOUNT VERNON, 22d June, 1785.

Dear Sir—I stand indebted to you for your favours of the 3d, 7th, and 29th of last month, and feel myself exceedingly obliged to your excellency for the communications, and enclosures therein.

It gives me pleasure to find that an ordinance of Congress has passed, respecting the western territory. A little longer delay of this business, and I believe the country would have been settled, notwithstanding all that could have been done to prevent it; as it is, I am not clear that the same respect will be paid *now* to this ordinance, that would have been at an earlier period, before men began to speculate in lands northwest of the Ohio, and to obtrude themselves thereon. From the general tenor of my letters, from very respectable and intelligent characters in France, as late as the end of March, it would seem most likely that the dispute between the emperor and Holland will be settled without bloodshed, and that the former will scarcely be able to effect the exchange of his dominions in the Netherlands for the dutchy of Bavaria; among other reasons, because the Duke Deux Ponts, nephew and heir to the elector, is opposed thereto. But, notwithstanding, the state of politics and temper of some of the formidable powers of Europe are such, as to place war at no very remote distance. I have just parted with Mr. and Mrs. (Macauly) Graham; who, after a stay of about ten days, left this in order to embark for England from New-York. I am obliged to you for introducing a lady to me whose reputation among the literati is so high, and whose principles are so much and so justly admired by the friends to liberty and of mankind. It gave me pleasure to find that her sentiments, respecting the inadequacy of the powers of Congress, (as also those of Dr. Price) coincided with my own. Experience evinces the truth of these observations, and the late movements of the mercantile interest exhibits a recent proof of the conviction it is working in the popular mind; but it is unfortunate for us, that evils which might have been averted must

be first felt, and our national character for wisdom, justice, and temperance called in question, before we can govern the political machine.

The plan for improving and extending the navigation of the river Potomac is in a promising way; enclosed, I do myself the honour of sending you the printed proceedings of the board of directors. Mrs. Washington joins me in compliments and every good wish for you, and with great esteem, regard, and respect,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Col. Wm. Brent died two or three days ago. Your son Ludwell was well at our court yesterday.

MOUNT VERNON, March 15, 1785.

DEAR SIR—I have had the honour to receive your excellency's favour of the 14th of February, and pray you to accept my thanks for the copy of the treaty with the Western Indians, with which you were so obliging as to furnish me; from the accounts given me last fall, (whilst I was on the Ohio) I did not expect such a cession of territory from the tribes that met. The Shawnees are pretty numerous, and among the most warlike of the Ohio Indians; but if the subscribing Indians mean to keep good faith, and a treaty should be favourably negotiated with the more southerly Indians, their spirit must yield, or they might easily be extirpated. The wisdom of Congress will now be called upon to fix a happy medium price on these lands, and to point out the most advantageous mode of seating them, so as that law and good government may be administered, and the Union strengthened and supported thereby. Progressive seating, I conceive, is the only means by which this can be effected; and unless in the scale of politics, more than one new state is found necessary at this time, the unit I believe would be found more pregnant with advantages than the decies. The latter if I mistake not, will be more *advancive* of individual interest, than the public welfare. As you will have the untowardness, jealousy, and pride, which are characteristic of the Spanish nation to contend with, it is more than probable that Mr. Gardoque will give Congress a good deal of trouble respecting the navigation of the river Mississippi. To me it should seem, that the true policy of that government would be to

make New Orleans a free mart, instead of shutting its ports; but their ideas of trade are very confined I believe. I take the liberty of putting a letter under cover of this to Mr. Lee. Mrs. Washington offers her respectful compliments to you.

I have the honour to be, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obt. humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

His Excellency Richard H. Lee.

MOUNT VERNON, August 22, 1785.

Dear Sir—In my absence with the directors of the Potomac navigation, to examine the river and fix a plan of operations, your favour begun on the 23d, and ended the 31st of July, came to this place. I am sorry to hear of your late indisposition, but congratulate you on your recovery; hoping that the re-establishment of your health will be of long continuance. The packet which you were so obliging as to send me, came safely, and I thank you for your care of it; but for want of knowledge of the language, I can form no opinion of my own of the dramatic performance of Monsieur Serviteur le Barbier.

The currency of my information from France is, that the dispute between the emperor and Holland, will be accommodated without bloodshed; but after the explicit declarations which have been made on both sides, I do not see how either (especially the first) can recede from his claims. To save appearances, and to let the contending parties down handsomely, say some of my letters, is now the greatest difficulty; but all agree, that a spark may set the whole in flames; indeed Bavaria, it is expected, will yet do this.

It is to be hoped that our minister at the court of London, will bring that government to an explanation respecting the western posts, which it still retains on the American side of the line, contrary to the spirit, if not to the letter, of the treaty. My opinion from the first, and so I declared it, was, that these posts would be detained from us, as long as they could be held under any pretence whatsoever. I have not changed it, though I wish for cause to do so, as it may ultimately become a serious matter. However singular the opinion may be, I cannot divest myself of it, that the navigation of the Mississippi, at this time, ought to be no object with us; on the contrary, till we have a little time allowed to open and make easy the ways between the Atlantic states and the western territory, the obstructions had better remain. There

be first felt, and our national character for wisdom, justice, and temperance called in question, before we can govern the political machine.

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is nothing which binds one country, or one state, to another, but interest; without this cement, the western inhabitants (which more than probably will be composed in a great degree of foreigners) can have no predilection for us; and a commercial connexion is the only tie we can have upon them.

It is clear to me that the trade of the lakes, and of the river Ohio, as low as the Great Kanhawa, (if not to the falls) may be brought to the ports on the Atlantic, easier and cheaper, (taking the whole voyage together) than it can be carried to New Orleans; but once open the door to the latter, before the obstructions are removed from the former; let commercial connexions (which lead to others) be formed, and the habit of that trade be well established, and it will be found no easy matter to divert it; and vice versa.

When the settlements are stronger and more extended to the westward, the navigation of the river Mississippi will be an object of importance; and we shall be able then (reserving our claim) to speak a more efficacious language than policy, I think, should dictate at present.

I never have, and I hope never shall hear, any serious mention of a paper emission in this state, yet such a thing may be in agitation. Ignorance and design are productive of much mischief, (the first is the tool of the latter,) and are often set to work as suddenly as unexpectedly; those with whom I have conversed on this subject, in this part of the state, reprobate the idea exceedingly.

We have lately had the pleasure of Miss Lee's, and Miss Hannah's company at this place; they were both well five days ago. Mrs. Washington prays you to accept her compliments; and with sentiments of great respect, esteem and regard,

I am dear Sir, your most obedt. and affectionate humble servt.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

P. S. Your name, I well remember, stands amongst those of the subscribers for a share in the Potomac Company.

G. W.

MOUNT VERNON, February 20, 1787.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of the 15th, with the seed of the honey locust came safe to hand, and claims my particular thanks. I have but one doubt of its forming the best hedge in the world; and that is, whether it can be sufficiently

dwarfed. If this cannot be effected, the other purpose mentioned in your letter, and a valuable one too, of subserving stock, is alone sufficient to induce the cultivation of the tree.

Mrs. Washington offers respectful compliments to Mrs. Lee, to whom, though I have not the honour of being known, I beg leave to tender mine; we both join in best wishes for you, and the young ladies, and with great esteem and respect, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

PHILADELPHIA, 19th July, 1787.

DEAR SIR—I had the honour to receive your favour of the 15th instant, and thank you for the ordinance which was enclosed in it.

My sentiments with respect to the navigation of the Mississippi, have been long fixed, and are not dissimilar to those which are expressed in your letter. I have ever been of opinion, that the true policy of the Atlantic states, would be, instead of contending prematurely, for the free navigation of that river, (which eventually, and perhaps as soon as it shall be our true interest to obtain it) must happen, to open and improve the natural communication with the western country through which, the produce of it, might be transported with convenience and ease to our markets. Till you get low down the Ohio, I conceive, (considering the length of the voyage to New Orleans —the strength of the current—and the time required to perform the voyage,) that it would be the interest of the inhabitants thereof, to bring their produce to our ports; and sure I am, there is no other tie, by which they will long form a link in the chain of federal union. I believe, however, from the temper in which those people appear to be, and from the ambitious and turbulent spirit of some of their demagogues, that it has become an important point to decide (when every circumstance which attends this business is taken into view,) what is best to be done: the state of Virginia, having entered so warmly into the matter, is not among the least embarrassing and disagreeable parts of the difficulty.

Will you permit me to put the enclosed letter under cover to you? From the gentlemen to whom it is addressed, I have lately received a letter, of which, this is an acklowledgement. With very great esteem and regard, I have the honour to be, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate servant,

GEO: WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, August 2d, 1789.

DEAR SIR,—The extreme hurry in which I have been thrown for several days, to compare the merits and pretentions of the several applicants for appointments, under the revenue law, (in order that the nominations might speedily follow the passage of the collection bill,) has prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your favour of the 27th ultimo, until this time. Mr. Charles Lee, will certainly be brought forward as collector of the port of Alexandria; but for the reason you have assigned, and from a persuasion that Mr. Thomas Lee is under a mistake with respect to the supposed emoluments, of the office at Dumfries, I think it would be best that Scott should go there; which will give poor Hanson, (who is worthy of something better if with propriety it could be given to him) the surveyorship at Alexandria.

As I am perfectly unacquainted with the port of Yeocomico, and with the characters living there, I would thank you for naming a fit person as a collector for that district, by the bearer, or by ten o'clock, A. M., to morrow.

I thought you looked badly the other day, but not having heard of your indisposition, I said nothing; I hope your health is quite restored. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant.

GEO: WASHINGTON.

CORRESPONDENCE

BETWEEN

RICHARD HENRY LEE,

AND

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, April 29th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—If I were to consider punctilio more than the suggestions of friendship, I should expect an answer to some of the letters I have written you, before I despatched another; but I ever hated ceremonies, and shall not commence ceremony with you. I wish it were in my power to give you any very interesting news, but alas! the slow assembling of an army, prevents any attempt from us upon the enemy, and will give them an opportunity of collecting reenforcements from all quarters.

The French ministry assure our commissioners, that few succours can be drawn from Germany; but we find they are endeavouring to supply deficiencies from among the tories in the states of Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, where they have secret emissaries in abundance; for these purposes of corruption it seems, that Lord Howe is furnished with a secretary, who is the greatest adept in the art of bribing that now lives. I am afraid this country furnishes too good materials for him to work upon. The plan of the British court, if they can find men and money, and should not be disturbed by other wars, as it was settled in January last, was to reenforce Carleton and Howe; the latter to enter New England with his whole force, for their *extermination;* whilst the former kept the middle colonies in awe, by invading New York through the lakes; Burgoyne with ten thousand men, chiefly Germans, to attack Virginia and Maryland; the southern and middle colonies to be put under a *military* government. This may be relied on as fact, and shows, if it wanted showing, the just and merciful spirit that animates

the leaders of our enemy's council: and I assure you, those that execute in the field are faithful representatives. It is on all hands agreed, that our own tories are more formidable to us, than the British force, and that a few leaders among them, are the authors of all the mischief. It becomes then every legislature, to secure the country against their machinations, by the most vigorous and discouraging laws. I really believe, that numbers of our lazy, worthless young men. will not be induced to come forth into the service of their country, unless the states adopt the mode recommended by Congress, of ordering drafts from the militia. This may induce the young . . . . . to take the continental bounty, rather than serve for nothing of that sort. If the eighty-eight battalions were completed, adieu to British tyranny, and every chance for its succeeding. Howe's army still remains on the heights near Brunswick, and General Washington to occupy the country round him. Farewell, dear sir; regard me as

Your affectionate friend.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, May 20th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—We are this moment informed here, that some evil disposed people have industriously propagated among the North Carolina troops, and among the recruits of Virginia, in the upper parts, *that the plague* rages in our army; in consequence of which, it is said, the recruiting business stops, and desertions are frequent. There never was a more infamous and groundless falsehood.

The army is extremely healthy, and the proper measures are pursued to keep them so. I mention this, dear sir, that some adequate plan may be adopted, to stop the progress of such wicked lies, as are now with industry circulated through the country; force having failed, our enemy's fraud is substituted, and corruption is swiftly and silently pushed through every quarter. One plan, now in frequent use, is to assassinate the characters of the friends of America, in every place, and by every means: at this moment, they are now reading in Congress, an audacious attempt of this kind against the brave General Arnold. Farewell, dear sir, I wish you happiness.

Nothing new in Jersey.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, August 25th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—It will not perhaps be disagreeable to you, in your retirement, sometimes to hear the events of war; and how in other respects we proceed in the arduous business we are engaged in, since the loss of Ticonderoga, (into the cause of which, and the conduct of the commanding officers, Congress have ordered inquiry to be made.) In consequence of General Burgoyne's speedy march to fort Letward, our affairs in that quarter begin to wear a favourable appearance. In addition to Burgoyne's force, another body of men came down the Mohock river, by way of Ossuego, and laid siege to fort Stanwix, or Schuyler, as it is now called; at this place a battle ensued with the Tryon county militia, in which the enemy were driven from the ground, with the loss of more than two hundred Indians, and several regulars. Colonel Willett making a sally from the fort, did great injury to the enemy, and took from them a great quantity of baggage, with two or three field pieces. However, the militia having lost many men in the action, and their best officers having been killed or wounded, they retired, and left the enemy to return and lay siege to fort Schuyler, the garrison of which was bravely defending it, when General Arnold was detached with a body of men to relieve the place; we expect every day to hear of his success. To the northward of this, in New Hampshire, General Stark, with two thousand militia, attacked Colonel Baum and fifteen hundred regular troops with cannon; the consequence, you will find in the enclosed hand-bill. This was an important victory, well-timed, and will probably occasion Mr. Burgoyne to retire very quickly; if he does not, I can be bold to *augur* his destruction. He is at Saratoga and fort Letward, our main army, a few miles in his front, at the mouth of Mohock river; I expect Generals Lincoln and Arnold, will presently be in his rear, after which his chance for returning is very small. General Gates has joined the northern army, and now commands in that quarter. Putnam, with five thousand men, commands on the heights of Hudson river, above New York, in which place, General Clinton is left with about three thousand men. After General Howe had long raised the curiosity of this part of the world, to know what could be his view in embarking his army, and coasting it for five weeks in a most oppressively hot season, at length he appears at the very head of Chesapeake bay, where he remains with more than two hundred sail of vessels; the troops not yet landed, that we know of, but I imagine they were put on shore yesterday. We are

left yet to guess his object: it may be supposed, either for this city, or to conduct a line from Chesapeake to New Castle, and thereby enclose a large tract of country, between that bay, Delaware, and the sea. Let his plan be what it may, General Washington, with a gallant army, is gone to enter a caveat. The general with his army passed through this city yesterday, and they made a fine appearance; to aid the army, and make the business secure, Congress has called for militia from this state, Delaware, Maryland, and the northern counties of Virginia. Should General Howe venture to enter the country against this force, I think his ruin will be sure, notwithstanding we are told his master depends on the desparate efforts that Generals Howe and Cornwallis must make to redeem their "bankrupt honour;" so, we learn from France, the king of England hath said. We have no reason to suppose from our foreign intelligence, that a war in Europe will immediately take place, but that every preparation for it, is making, remains without doubt; and, in the mean time, we shall surely receive most substantial aid from our friends there. The fleet of France grows stronger daily, and with it, the spirit of the court rises, as appears by the answer to Lord Stormont, when he told the French minister, that the peace cannot continue long, if North America continued to draw supplies from France, "Nous ne desirons pas la Guerre et ne la craignons pas." In truth every act of falsehood and fraud has been practised to prevent a war there, but it seems clear that this will not long prevail. Dr. Lee is returned from Spain, and is gone to the Prussian court; that monarch is fond of commerce and is desirous of being acquainted with the whole nature of ours. He is offended with the court of London, and has no reason to fear its resentment. We have good reason to expect considerable advantage from his friendship. If our friends fail us not, and our union continues, no cause was ever safer than ours; to prevent the former most extensive and vigorous taxes should immediately take place. The sum in circulation is immense, and no corrective can be applied but taxation; nor was there ever a time, when the vast plenty of money rendered that business more easy. The loan-office, with that, will, I believe, answer; and upon the success of our friends, will probably depend the events of our exertions. The confederation progresses but slowly, occasioned by the immensity of business created by the war; but, I find, our right to our charter bounds, as stated by our act of government, will be strongly contested. The charter of 1609, it is said, has been vacated, and that no transfer of that charter right can be shown from the company to the

people of Virginia; and that therefore the ungranted lands were the property of the crown, and being taken from it by common exertions, must become common stock. Will you be so kind as to favour me with your authorities and reasons, in support of our rights. I am, with great regard and esteem, dear sir, your most affectionate and obedient

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

YORK, May 11, 1778.

DEAR SIR—We have once more ventured into the field of composition, as the enclosed address will show you; and I have the pleasure to acquaint you that Congress have unanimously ratified the treaties with France, and directed the ratifications to be presented for exchange in due season. The enclosed pamphlet, I take to be a production of Dr. Franklin; it is well written, and was published first in Holland. When it began to make a noise, the British minister procured its suppression; but this, as usual, raised the public curiosity, and procured it additional readers. We have translated it here, and omitting one or two paragraphs, that are not now true; it will be published, next week, in the gazette of this place. The reasons are good, and may be well used, in these states, to support public credit. Suppose you were to have a translation published by way of supplement, to our Virginia gazettes. My heart is so bent upon the success of our country, that it grieves me extremely to hear a probability of measures being adopted, that, I am sure, will injure us. I am told that application will be made to this Assembly, to make Mr. Loycantes commissioner. Is it possible, that such an application can be attended to! Thus to treat a gentleman of unquestioned ability, and of reputation in France, and after we have applied to that court to obtain leave for his longer residence among us than his furlough permitted! His character will not be hurt by it; but how mutable shall we appear, and how totally wrong it will be thus to dismiss an able, zealous, and most industrious artist, whilst we remain utterly ignorant of the necessary knowledge that he is both able and willing to instruct us in? I think the wise men of our Assembly will suppress the spirit of vain ambition that prompts to this selfish application.

We are told that the enemies' movements at Philadelphia

denote their departure; but these, perhaps, may be designed to amuse us, and prevent the collection of a strong army.

I am, dear Sir, sincerely yours,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, ESQ.

PHILADELPHIA, July 20, 1778.

DEAR SIR—The condition of our affairs is much changed, since last I had the pleasure of writing to you, as by the favour of his most Christian majesty, we now are become masters of the sea, and our own coast at least. Ten days ago arrived in the Delaware, a French squadron commanded by Count D'Estaing, of twelve sail of the line and four frigates, having of seamen and land troops eleven thousand men on board. There is one ship of 90 guns, one of 80, six of 74, three of 64, and four frigates. Having missed the English here, they proceeded to New York in quest of them, and are now before that harbour, the depth of water being unfortunately insufficient to admit such large ships. The English, whose fleet is inferior, are well contented to remain within the honours, and suffer Monsieur, the count, to intercept every vessel coming to New York. He has already taken fifteen sail. But the French admiral being an officer of great activity and spirit, seems not content with this small work, and therefore, I believe, he will go immediately to Rhode Island, where he can easily destroy the ships, and with the assistance of our force there make prisoners of two thousand British troops on that island. With this squadron came Le Sieur Girard, minister plenipotentiary from his most Christian majesty. He is a sensible well bred man, and perfectly well acquainted with the politics of Europe. From him I learn, that the court of France considers the message of the King of England to his Parliament, and their answer upon the Count Noaille's notification of our alliance, as a denunciation of war, on the part of Great Britain, and that they mean to act accordingly without an express declaration, leaving this last to England. We are busied now in settling the ceremonials for the reception of foreign ministers of every denomination, and I assure you it is a work of no small difficulty.

When this is finished Monsieur Girard will have his audience in Congress, I suppose this week. General Washington has crossed the North River, and will co-operate with the admiral in measures to be conducted against the common

enemy. The British commissioners have sent us a second letter very silly, and equally insolent.

The preliminaries, insisted on by Congress (an acknowledgment of independence, and a withdrawing of their fleets and armies) not having been either of them, complied with, this letter is to receive no answer. We have detected and fully exposed Governor Johnston, who under the plausible guise of friendship and virtue, has endeavoured to bribe members of Congress; the whole body, indeed, as well as individual members. The confederation is ratified by ten states; there remains only Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland. But, I suppose, their obstinacy will, ere long, submit to their interest, and a perfect coalition take place.

I am much hurried, though with great esteem, dear Sir, your most obt. servt.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, August 10, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I agree, entirely, with you, concerning the importance of the confederation, and have never failed to press it. Ten states have ratified; Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland have not, and one of them, Maryland, has adjourned, until November, so that the new Congress, under the confederation, cannot meet this year, at the time proposed by the confederacy. The enclosed paper contains all the news we have, except that it is well reported that Lord Howe being reenforced by four ships of the line, sailed from New York on Thursday last, with his whole force, to attack the French squadron now at Rhode Island. Howe has a greater number of ships, but Count D'Estaing has heaviest metal. The attack by sea and land was to be made on Thursday on the enemy at Rhode Island, where they have five thousand five hundred men strongly posted, and three or four frigates. Our force will be about fourteen thousand men besides the squadron. Success seems certain, if Lord Howe does not get up in time to prevent it. The Count D'Estaing is an officer of approved merit, and his ships very strong in every respect, so that I think he will check the British insolence on the sea, as we have already done on the land. No war in Europe on the 10th of June, nor do I believe Great Britain means to resent the proceedings of France. It seems to be a contest between the two nations which shall be last in declaring war. Some advantages to accrue from treaties, is the cause of this.

To us it matters little, since we so powerfully experience the aid of France. For it is certain this squadron is to act with and for us, so long as the enemy, by continuing here, renders it necessary. There is great probability that the emperor of Germany and the king of Prussia, will fall out about the Bavarian dominions. There will be a battle of giants, each party having three hundred thousand men, the best disciplined troops in the world. France, I fancy, has taken measures to avoid this quarrel, that her whole force may be employed against England. The design against Detroit is abandoned for the present, and a force will be sent into the Indian country to chastise their late insolence. I heartily wish that the wisdom of our country may be early next session employed to regulate our finance, restore public credit, determine about our back lands, and if possible get rid of our public commerce. If it succeeds with us, I believe it will be the first instance that has ever appeared of the kind. But many there are of injury derived from such trade. Whilst necessity impelled, it was unavoidable, but now that private commerce will furnish abundance of all things, I incline to think our interest will consist in withdrawing from foreign trade. Remember me to Mr. Mazzie.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, May 3d, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Always attentive to your commands, I have obtained here, and now enclose you the song and the receipt you desired. I once had both of them at home, but they are mislaid among a mass of papers, so that I could find neither previous to my leaving Chantilly, or your request would then have been complied with. I hope you have received the pamphlet I sent you some weeks ago, entitled, "Observations on the American Revolution," containing a collection of the most material Congress papers, with a few remarks interspersed, in order to show in one comprehensive view the progress of our glorious revolution, and to rectify some false representations of the British commissioners. This pamphlet was sent by an express that came here from Mr. Harvey, and returned to Williamsburgh, with intention to follow Mr. Harvey to Albemarle, if they found him not at the former of the places. I wish it were in my power to entertain you with news, but we are here as void of that as if profound

peace reigned throughout the world. We have not heard from Europe for four months, and although there then seemed a disposition in many powers, to restore the general tranquillity, yet all were industriously preparing for war, and some being actually engaged; the fate of millions hung in doubtful balance. The armies here continue quiet within their quarters; that of the enemy, by their late embarkation of nine regiments, rendered too weak for taking the field, must content itself with holding New York as the Gibraltar of America. If we can baffle the southern invasion, it is clear to me, that the game will be presently up with our enemies, and that they will be compelled by inevitable necessity, to be content with the loss of thirteen flourishing states. A very fit consequence of the foolish and wicked attempt to reduce to slavery, so many free, useful, and affectionate friends. I hope that when you and my other friend consider all things, that you will not blame me for sending my resignation to the Assembly. I am really injured in my health, by such continued close application, and a numerous family demand some attention; add to these, that, persecuted as I have been, by the united voice of toryism, speculation, faction, envy, malice, and all uncharitableness, nothing but the certain prospect of doing essential service to my country, can compensate for the injuries I receive. It would content me indeed, to sacrifice every consideration to the public good, that would result from such persons as yourself, Mr. Wythe, Mr. Mason, and some others, being in Congress, I would with persevering ardour through every difficulty, in conjunction with such associates. I am informed, that Colonel Blackburn, intends to propose a bill this session, for the relief of landlords; I shoud suppose, that the wisdom and justice of the legislature, can, and will devise some remedy for the relief of this class of people among us; I am one who have the misfortune, to see myself and family, nearly ruined by the retrospective effect of our law. Almost the whole of my landed estate was rented out some years before this war, for low cash rents, and under the faith of existing law, which secured me specie for my rents. The vast sums of paper money, that have been issued, (and this being now a tender for the discharge of rents growing from old contracts,) and the consequent depreciation, has well nigh effected an entire transfer of my estate to my servants; this year, sir, the rents of four thousand of fine land, will not buy me twenty barrels of corn. I am very far from desiring, that the law should place these contracts literally as they were, but substantially, it seems just that they should be; when the tenant agreed to pay me six

pounds for an hundred acres rent, he could not sell his tobacco for more than sixteen or eighteen shillings an hundred, now he sells his tobacco for ten and twelve pounds per cwt. It does not appear to me, that the public good can be concerned in thus transferring the property of landlords, to their tenants; but, public justice demands, that the true meaning, and genuine spirit of contracts, should be complied with. It appears to me, that an act of commutation, might set this business right, by directing the payment in produce, at the prevailing price of such produce when the contracts were made, leaving this to be settled by the courts annually, as they formerly did, in the case of exchange. I well know your love of justice, to be such, that your approbation will be given to any proper plan, for doing right in the premises: for my own part, I am willing to suffer every thing, rather than injure the public cause, but in the present state of things, I can see no possibility of public injury, from thus rendering private justice. I am, with much esteem and regard, dear sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

PHILADELPHIA, May 22, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I have paid due attention to your favour of the 21st, and I believe there would have been no difficulty in obtaining what is desired for Baron de Geismar, had not the enemy created the difficulties that do exist. They absolutely refuse to admit partial exchanges, and they have lately proposed such unfair terms for general exchange, that nothing can be done in either of these ways. They will not allow one of our officers to come out on parole, if like permission be granted to one of theirs, as appeared in the case of Major Jasserers, of the regiment of Hesse Hanau. Upon consideration of this matter, with your friend Mr. Peters, who is one of the board of war, we conclude, the way to put this matter into the best train, will be for the baron to apply to the British commander in chief, for this parole exchange, and write to General Kniphausen, to support the request, that these letters be sent here to the board of war, and they will immediately forward them through the commissary of prisoners, expressing their willingness to gratify the baron. An objection is raised here to gratifying this officer, without receiving something like an equivalent from the enemy, as tending to encourage their obstinacy, in repressing a general

exchange, on terms of fair equality, by which our captive officers . . . . . We have no news here, but what comes from Virginia, all good men are waiting with anxious expectation to hear that our countrymen have given these wicked invaders cause to repent of their undertaking. We have been told that Colonel Hamilton, of Detroit, is our prisoner, made so by the brave Colonel Clarke; I wish it may be true, and I hope the prisoners will be well secured, because his enmity to us, his activity and influence among the Indians, are equal and all very great. My respects to Mr. Wythe, and my other friends. I am, dear sir, yours, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON, Esq.

TRENTON, November 18th, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR—The same cause that deprived me of the pleasure of hearing from you sooner, in answer to my former letter, has, in a great degree, prevented me from sooner acknowledging the receipt of your favour, of September 23d, 1783, which I received in the following winter, when labouring under a long continued, severe illness, that has nearly ended my days. I thank God that I am now pretty well recovered, insomuch that I have been prevailed on, once more, to take a seat in Congress, my brother's three years, having ended with this federal year. I am much grieved, my dear friend, to observe the wonderful lassitude that prevails in public affairs; it is now eighteen days since Congress ought to have assembled here, and, as yet, we have but five states; and it surprises me, that these five are southern; none but the worthy Dr. Holton, from your state, being yet arrived from the eastward; whence, formerly, we used to derive most punctuality, alacrity, and judicious despatch of public business; yet, there are many subjects of great importance, that demand the speedy, temperate, wise, and firm, discussion of Congress. We have seen here, the late report of a committee of the privy council, in Great Britain, upon the petition of the West Indian planters, and merchants, proposing an open and liberal trade with these United States. In the report, all the illiberal and senseless principles of commerce, in Lord Sheffield's book, are taken up and recommended. This report was laid on the table of the House of Commons; but, it seems, that the Parliament is prorogued, without touching the subject of their commerce with us; so that it remains upon the old ground of proclamation, inter-

dicting trade with the British West Indies, but through the medium of British vessels. It is not difficult for an attentive and diligent inquirer, to discern the old leaven working in the British councils; the same men still rule in secret; the same measures are wished to be practised. Nor does it signify much whether Pitt or North, comes forward upon the stage; the nation, too like a strong, proud, and sullen man, angry from unexpected defeat, and, imputing misfortunes to casualties, would seem not averse to a second trial. I remember once when I detested the moderate man; at this moment, I think, that moderation, wisdom, firmness, and attention, are the principles proper for our adoption, and highly becoming the dignity of our successful situation; being always prepared for the worst, the best events will not be unpleasing; it is observable, that great hopes are entertained beyond the water, from the expectation of discord, disunion, and apathy, on our parts; I sincerely wish that their hopes may be blasted. We understand, that Deane and Arnold are in frequent conversation with the British ministers; and, it is said, that the former composed part of Lord Sheffield's work; indeed, the principles of that book, are precisely the same with those contained in one of Mr. Deane's intercepted letters, in the year 1781. What kind of conduct are we to expect from Great Britain, when its councils are mixed with gall? When the acrimony of blasted ambition and avarice, are permitted to insinuate advice? I shall be happy to be aided by your counsels, during my residence in Congress. Our letters may, in this direct line of post, be secure, especially as the times are not quite so inquisitive as formerly. I beg, that my best respects may be presented to Mrs. Adams; and remember me, if you please, to General Warren, to Mr. Gerry, and Mr. Lovell. I am, dear Sir,

Most sincerely and affectionately, your friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. SAMUEL ADAMS,
Boston, Massachusetts Bay.

TRENTON, New Jersey, November 20th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I should sooner have done myself the honour of writing to you, if it had been in my power to have communicated any thing agreeable; but I could only have informed you, that we had not, and that we cannot say when we shall have, members enough to make a Congress; as yet, we

have but four states convened. This lassitude, in our public councils, must afflict our friends, and encourage the hopes of our trans-Atlantic foes, who look at us with an evil eye. Mr. Wolcott arrived here yesterday, with the treaty, made at fort Stanwix, with the Six Nations; and he informs us, that the other two commissioners have proceeded to Pittsburg, to treat with the western tribes. He thinks, (from the satisfaction that appeared among some Shawanee chiefs, who were at Fort Stanwix,) that the commissioners will not find much difficulty in their treaty with the western nations. I have the honour to enclose you a copy of the northern treaty, and shall be happy to know your opinion of it. I understand, from Mr. Wolcott, that the commissioners of the United States met many difficulties, thrown in their way by New York, which they overcame, at last, by much firmness and perseverance. It is unfortunate when private views obstruct public measures, and more especially when a state becomes opposed to the States; because, it seems to confirm the predictions of those who wish us not well, and who cherish hopes from a discord arising from different interests. Colonel Monroe, of our delegation, who is lately returned from a tour to Montreal, Niagara, and Lake Erie, informs us, that he learnt, in his journey, that the western posts were to be detained from us; and, that the reason assigned, was, because of the conduct of New York and Virginia; the former for pushing the law of confiscation beyond the terms of peace, and Virginia for not repealing the laws impeding the recovery of British debts. The governor of New York, told Colonel Monroe, that it was a mistaken charge upon them, for that they had not confiscated since the provisional articles; it is to be lamented, that any pretext should be furnished for injuring us in the essential manner that the detention of these posts will do. The Parliament, it seems, is prorogued, without touching the subject of their trade with us, although a committee of the privy council, upon the petition of the West India merchants and planters, had reported an approbation of all the silly, malignant principles of Lord Sheffield, respecting our trade with the British West Indies. This book of Lord Sheffield, has been very ably answered, by several writers, in Great Britain. My respects, if you please, to your lady; I hope that she has recovered her health.

I have the honour to be, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General Washington, Mount Vernon.

TRENTON, in New Jersey, November 20, 1784.

SIR—I wish it were in my power to give you the satisfaction that I know it would afford you, to be informed that Congress had assembled, and was proceeding well with the public business. Unfortunately, we have not yet a Congress; although twenty days are elapsed since the time appointed for its meeting, but four states have been convened. No doubt, Colonel Monroe has informed his correspondents of the intelligence he received, on his tour to Montreal, Niagara, &c. that one reason assigned for detaining the western posts from the United States, was, because Virginia had not repealed her laws impeding the recovery of British debts; it is sincerely to be wished, that the advocates for retaining those laws, would no longer insist upon furnishing pretext for detaining from the United States, possessions of such capital importance to the Union, as these posts are. I have the honour to enclose you a copy of the treaty made at fort Stanwix, with the Six Nations; it was brought here by Mr. Wolcott, who informs us, that the other two commissioners were gone to Pittsburg, to hold a treaty there with the western nations; and, he apprehends, (from the content that appeared at Stanwix, among some Shawanee chiefs,) that the commissioners will not find much difficulty in treating with the western tribes. The accounts, that we daily receive, of the powerful emigrations from our state to Georgia, North and South Carolina, and from the interior parts to Kentucky, are very alarming. The causes assigned, are two—the desire of removing from heavy taxes, and the search after land. It certainly becomes our legislature to consider this point with great attention, and to remove, or lessen, the causes that effect the depopulation of the country. Do you not think, sir, that the taxes might be considerably lessened by bringing all our debts, foreign and domestic, into view, and funding the whole. After this, let such taxes be imposed as will most punctually pay the interest, and the principal by very slow degrees. This would satisfy the public creditors, because the certainty of receiving the interest, will render the principal vendible, on good terms; and the tax might, in that case, be much lowered from its present enormous height. I think, that I may venture safely to say, that our revenue, certificate, and all other taxes, amount, in the aggregate, to a heavier taxation than prevails in any part of the world. Upon this circumstance, I find some British writers founding the hope of our depopulation. It surprised me a good deal, that our last Assembly did not take up and adopt, for the

ease of our fellow citizens, the facilities given by Congress, in their act of the 28th of April last. By this act (which, I understand, is before the Assembly) one fourth of the federal demand against us, may be discharged with certificates of interest for money loaned the United States, or for interest on liquidated debts of the United States. If these certificates were, by law, made receivable in the revenue tax, it would certainly, and considerably, facilitate the payment of that tax. It seems, that the Parliament of Great Britain was prorogued without any thing being done respecting our trade with them, although a committee of the privy council, upon the petition of the West India merchants and planters, for a free trade between them and the United States, had reported an approbation of all the silly, malignant commercial restraints upon our trade with their West India islands, that are to be found in Lord Sheffield's book, on the commerce of the two countries. I have the honour to be, with much esteem and regard, Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

JAMES MADISON, Esq.
In the Assembly of Virginia.

TRENTON, Nov. 26, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I received your agreeable letter the day after mine, of the 20th instant, had been despatched. I thank you for the very particular and satisfactory information that you have favoured me with. It is certainly comfortable to know that the legislature of our country is engaged in beneficial pursuits, for I conceive that the general assessment and a digest of the moral laws are very important concerns; the one to secure our peace, and the other our morals. Refiners may weave reason into as fine a web as they please, but the experience of all times shows religion to be the guardian of morals; and he must be a very inattentive observer in our country, who does not see that avarice is accomplishing the destruction of religion, for want of a legal obligation to contribute something to its support. The declaration of rights, it seems to me, rather contends against forcing modes of faith and forms of worship in religious matters, than against compelling contribution for the support of religion in general. I fully agree with the Presbyterians that true freedom embraces the Mahometan and the Gentoo, as well as the Christian religion. I believe there is no doubt but that the population of

our country depends eminently upon our revenue laws; they therefore demand intense consideration. It is natural for men to fly from oppression to ease, and whilst our taxes are extremely heavy, and North Carolina and Georgia pay little or no tax, it is not to be wondered that so many of our people flock to these states. I do not mean by this that we should not most honourably and punctually pay our debts, but I think we may fairly practise here, as other nations the most honest do; I mean exactly to pay the interest, and slowly to sink the principal; an attempt to do the latter too suddenly will ruin, by depopulating the country. The mode appears to be, a funding of the whole debt so as to certainly pay the interest and slowly the principal. Cannot a sinking fund be brought to bear upon the latter, by throwing all overflowings of taxes into a reservoir for gathering interst upon interest? I suppose that, at all events, the facilities offered by Congress in their act of 28th of April last, will be introduced into the revenue law amendments of this session. The people have certainly suffered much hitherto by not knowing, in season, what taxes are lawfully demandable from them; for want of this information, numbers are compelled to submit to the extortions and abuses of collectors. The treasurer used formerly to publish annually, in the papers, what were to be the taxes of the year, and this mode was then very useful; but at present, the dispersion of newspapers is so uncertain, that the information through that channel would reach but few. A statement from the treasury, printed in the way of handbills to be put up at the court-houses and churches, might, perhaps, furnish the requisite information, and save the people from extensive abuse.

I am very happy to know, for the honour of our country, that there is a probability of the impeding laws* being again taken under deliberation. What I wrote you, in my last, upon this subject, is a most serious consideration, and the enclosed paragraph, taken from a late paper, will show you how quickly the fame of our proceedings travels, and the effect that they are likely to have upon our commerce. By the fifth article of the confederation, the annual meeting of Congress is to be on the first Monday in November, and by our act establishing one yearly meeting of the Assembly, and that to be on the third Monday in October, you will see, sir, that there is very little probability of Virginia being represented in Congress for some time after its federal day of meeting, so that it becomes necessary to consider this matter.

*Impeding the recovery of British debts.

I suppose that either the Assembly's time of meeting must be altered, or the delegates for the ensuing federal year be chosen this session. We have not yet made a Congress, but we have some reason to expect eight states on Monday next. I understand that Spain is likely to insist upon the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, which will render the exploring our western waters of the greater importance.

I am, dear sir,
With great esteem and regard,
Your most obedient and very humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

JAMES MADISON, Esq.

TRENTON, Dec. 18, 1784.

DEAR SIR—We are placed now, I think, pretty nearly in the same political relation under which our former correspondence was conducted; if it shall prove as agreeable to you to revive it, as you were then pleased to say it was to continue it, I shall be happy in contributing my part. The intelligence from hence cannot now be so interesting as formerly, because important events can be expected to occur but seldom in these times. It is, however, not unpleasant to know how things are going, and likely to go, in the world; that part of it, at least, in which we are in any manner interested. The courts of Spain and London do not seem to be upon such cordial principles with the United States as we might wish; the former seeming to be intent upon possessing, with a strong hand, the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, and the latter has actually encroached already upon our peace boundary on the river St. Croix, and they detain the western posts; assigning, for reason, that we have violated the peace by not repealing the laws that impede the recovery of British debts; the court of London seems also willing to injure its own possessions in the West Indies, rather than not wound our commerce with the British Isles. Much of this mischief arises from the want of a proper understanding of each other, and from the active industry and acrimonious misinformation that the exiled tories and refugees are constantly inculcating and asserting, without much danger of contradiction in having the truth fairly displayed. A well-informed gentleman, in our ministry abroad, therefore, lately wrote us, that we could much better have dealt with these people among ourselves, than we can counteract the evils now resulting from their conduct abroad. This temper of the two courts will, how-

ever, produce the necessity of sending to each a well-informed proper minister to negotiate commencing difficulties, and thereby prevent the evils of renewed war. It seems yet to be a matter of much doubt, whether the imperial determination to open the long closed navigation of the Scheldt, and restoring Antwerp to its former splendour as a commercial city, will not light up a general war upon the continent of Europe. I hope that our dispute with Great Britain may be previously settled. Our commissioners have concluded a peace with the Six Nations, and are now on their way to Cayahoga, on Lake Erie, to meet the western nations and to make a treaty with them also. I present you the compliments of the approaching season, and assure you that

I am, with great regard and esteem,
Dear sir,
Your most obedient and very humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. E. PENDLETON,
Virginia.

TRENTON, Dec. 26, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I had the honour to receive your obliging letter, of the 14th inst., seven days after its date, and I thank you, sir, for its friendly contents and sensible communications. You ideas concerning the western country are wise and just; they will certainly have great weight when that business shall be discussed in Congress, and that will probably be the case soon after we know the success of our commissioners at Cayahoga. Much time hath been taken up in the debate upon the permanent and temporary residence of Congress, and, finally, it is determined that the former shall be on the banks of the Delaware, not exceeding eight miles above or below this place, and on either side of the river that may be fixed upon by commissioners to be appointed for the purpose of superintending the federal buildings. New-York is to be the temporary residence, and Congress stands now adjourned to meet in that city on the 11th of January next, when I hope that we shall diligently put forward the public business. Spain seems determined to possess the exclusive navigation of Mississippi, which, with the bickerings that appear already on that quarter, will oblige Congress to send an able minister to Madrid, and one also to the court of London, that we may, if possible, negotiate commencing differences before they have proceeded too far. The western posts are withheld,

and an encroachment already made on our north-eastern boundary. The ambiguity in the treaty, arising from there being two rivers named St. Croix that empty into Passamaquady bay, has encouraged the British to settle the country between them, which is valuable, and I understand that, in the upper parts, these waters are distant seventy miles from each other; the fact is, that the easternmost river is the true St. Croix, the same name having been, of late date, only applied to the westernmost of these waters. The very unfriendly commercial principles entertained by the British ministry, and the disputes concerning debts and removed negroes, are points of consequence also; which together form a field for able and ample negotiation.

The Marquis Fayette had embarked for Europe before the letter for him, that you enclosed, came to my hands. I should be glad to know your pleasure concerning it; whether I am to send it on to France after him, or return it to you. My respectful compliments attend your lady, and wishing you and her the compliments of the season,

I am, with great esteem and regard,
Dear sir,
Your most obedient and very humble servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Gen. Washington.

NEW YORK, January 20, 1785.

Sir—I have the honour to send your excellency two letters that came under cover from France. 'Tis with pleasure I learn from Mr. Adams, that it is probable the negotiations of this winter may prevent the progress of hostilities in the spring, between the United Netherlands, and the emperor. And also that the spirits of your countrymen suffer no dejection, but that on the contrary, they are with much diligence and wisdom composing party quarrels, and preparing for the defence of the republic. Be so good as to present my compliments to your son, and be assured that I am, with every sentiment of esteem and regard sir, your excellency's most obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency Mr. Van Backle,
Minister Plenipotentiary from the
United Netherlands.

NEW YORK, February 14, 1785.

DEAR SIR—In reply to your favour of December 14th, I had the honour to write to you from Trenton, and I mentioned an enclosed letter from you, for the Marquis Fayette, which coming to hand after the marquis had sailed, I wished to know your pleasure, whether I should forward it to France, or return it to you. I have not been honoured with your commands on that point. Soon after my arrival in this city, I enclosed for you, in a letter, one of the few pamphlets addressed to the president of Congress, by Doctor Price, and I shall be happy to know that you have received it. I have now the pleasure, to send you a copy of the treaty this day received from the commissioners appointed to treat with the Western Indians. The Shawanese, you observe, are not there. And what effect this may have I am not able to say; but the Wyandots are stated as their superiors, from whence we may hope no very ill effects from their absence. The Court of Spain has appointed Mr. Gardoque their charge des affairs to the United States, and we have reason soon to expect his arrival. We are to apprehend a very firm ostensible demand from him, of the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi. His private orders touching our ulterior agreement may be another thing; time and wise negotiation, will unfold this very important matter to the United States, and to many individual states. My respects if you please to your lady. I have the honour to be with the truest respect and esteem dear sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General WASHINGTON.

NEW YORK, February 14, 1785.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of December 9th, has just now been put into my hands, together with the printed papers that you were pleased to send me, but I have not yet had the pleasure of finding Colonel Grayson here. I do sincerely wish to see my country flourish and be happy, so that if by any means in my power, I can contribute to this most desirable end, I shall certainly exert myself. No time or circumstance, can ever force from my mind, the sincere affection that I entertain for the original friends, to the just rights of America, whose wise and firm perseverance, has secured to the United States at least the blessings, without which, there

is little difference between men and brutes. The ill state of health that I contracted at Richmond in May 1783, still afflicts me, which, added to the business and the ceremony of my present office* afflicts me much, and must necessarily prevent me from such frequent communications, as otherwise I should undoubtedly make. With respect to official intelligence from Europe, we have none of great consequence; Mr. Adams thinks, that the negotiations of this winter will probably accommodate the difference between the emperor, and the United Netherlands, and our charge des affairs at Madrid, informs us that the court of Spain has appointed Mr. Gardoque, to come here as their minister and we expect him daily. His purpose is to treat of commerce, and territorial limits. Our ministers at Paris are generally proposing treaties of amity and commerce, with all the European commercial powers, and they receive answers very civil, but as yet no treaties formed, except such as you have seen notified from Congress. As you have been pleased to desire my reflections upon the state of affairs, I will give them freely, as they appear to me. The courts with which we are most immediately concerned, are Spain, England, France, and Holland; the two first, because we border on them, and because we have with each most pressing difficulty; the two last, because we are indebted to them both on the score of money lent, and friendship in other ways conferred. Spain is proud, and extremely jealous of our approximation to her South American territory, and fearing the example of our ascendency upon that country, is grasping forever at more territory, by way of security; and hoping to derive benefit to her system, from our want of system, our discord and inattention. Hence we may expect from Mr. Gardoque, an apparent firm demand of the exclusive navigation of the Mississippi, with some tempting commercial offers, to procure our assent to the loss of this very valuable navigation. But probably, the apprehension of a quarrel with us, and the effect of it upon their South American possessions, may secure to us, if we are wise and firm, the free navigation, to be finally agreed to by Spain; with Great Britain, our difficulties will be greater; equally proud with Spain, and much more powerful, with fewer reasons to fear a rupture with us, and more to hope from a successful one; she remains sullen after defeat, and seeming to wish for just provocation to renew the combat. The passions of states, and of individuals, are not very different; for what are the former, but a compound of individuals, and of course carrying into the composition, those

* President of Congress.

leading principles that characterize the parts. In private life, a wise and fortunate victor, over great strength, would, in all his conduct with the vanquished, show a respectful civility, avoiding every display of supposed superiority, and carefully shunning every appearance of giving cause for fresh offence. It seems to me, that if the conduct of America, had been founded on such principles our magnanimity must have been confessed, and that the seeds of future discord, would not have been so effectually sown as I fear they are. Both countries have been to blame, and transgressions against the terms of peace were on each side coeval, so that whilst we charged them with removing the slaves from New York, they pointed to the violence with which their friends were every where treated, with the detention of their debts, and with actions here brought against those who possessed houses in this city, whilst it was in their power by the fortune of war. This again is followed by their detention of the western posts, by their encroachments on our north-eastern boundary about St Croix, and by their unfriendly interruption of our commerce, and lately by arresting in London a merchant of Philadelphia for debt, because his privateer had taken, during the war, a vessel belonging to the complainant. This is an unpleasant state of things, and if temper and wisdom are not employed on both sides, it is not difficult to foresee a renewed rupture ere long. The principles of republics being virtuous, and their conduct therefore squaring with justice, they rather negotiate differences than fight them. Monarchies depend too much upon the *ultima ratio regum*. When we have acted fully up to our principle, we shall be upon strong ground to combat theirs. But the cause of virtue, without proper means to support it, must often fail. These considerations lead me to wish most sincerely that my country may quickly cease to give the smallest cause for just offence, and that our rulers would engrave upon their minds, the wisdom of the inscription upon the arsenal of Berne in Switzerland—That people happy are, who, during peace, prepare the necessary stores for war.

It is in vain for us to expect this from the United States—to be secure, each state must provide amply for itself; and whenever Great Britain shall find us just, temperate and prepared, she will be extremely cautious of hostile aggressions, or of unjust treatment of us. If this reasoning is right, how will your excellency's administration be marked for wisdom, if effectual attention be paid to the collection and preservation of military stores; I have here been informed, by an officer of rank in the continental artillery, at the sur-

render of York, that several pieces of our artillery were retaken from the enemy, and that they are now at Philadelphia; it deserves to be considered, whether these are not subject to be returned to us, upon demand of the state: there were also several pieces of our artillery, thrown into Pamunkey river, near New Castle, in 1781, and some other pieces fixed in the ground, and in vain attempted to be destroyed by the enemy. Baron Steuben lately sent us the enclosed letter, which I have now the honour to transmit; his published plan, is only an outline, but the details by which that plan is to be executed, he professes himself willing to communicate, when the state of Virginia shall call upon him, for them. The sum of this, (I fear, too long digression, upon our relative situation with Great Britain,) is, that being secure of having done right, we should be fully prepared to meet aggressions from that quarter; a sentiment founded upon an attentive consideration of the correspondence, between the British generals, during the late war, by which it is not difficult to discover, that experience had instructed them in this truth, that a war against the United States, had better be pushed in full force at first against Virginia. I have before observed to your excellency, that Mr. Adams thought we might expect a compromise between Holland and the emperor, from the negotiations of this winter; it is certain, that every influence of France, will be used to effect the compromise, for reasons very obvious: but, whilst the emperor demands a preliminary, that the Scheldt shall be opened, and Holland as peremtorily says, that it must not, it remains possible, but not probable, that an accommodation may take place: if it does not, the powers on the continent will be engaged in a most expensive war, whilst, as it seems, Great Britain will remain neuter, and by peace, preparing herself for war, render her hostile views, more dangerous to us. The apprehension of this difficulty, on the part of our friends, has probably produced the strong intimations that we must be exact in the payment of our interest upon the foreign loans; and the same reason does indeed call upon the United States, in the strongest sense, to be punctual in their payments, that those who have assisted us, in the day of our distres, may not suffer for their generosity.

The attention of Congress, has been applied to our western concerns, as your excellency will see by the treaties made with the Six Nations, and the western Indians; in the latter, the Shawanese are not included, but their being prevented by some active British emissary, from coming to the latter treaty, will probably not be attended with ill consequences,

as they are very much under the control of the Six Nations, and of the Wyandots, their powerful neighbours. The spring will open further treaties with the more southern tribes, north-west of the Ohio, and also, on the south-eastern side upon ours. and the frontiers of North and South Carolina, and Georgia.

Judging from myself, I suppose your excellency will be tired with the length of this letter, and if you will pardon it, I promise you, that I will not again transgress in the same manner. I have the honour to be, with sentiments of esteem, respect, and regard, sir, your excellency's most ob't serv't,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency, Gov. Henry.

NEW YORK, March 14th, 1785.

My dear Sir—Your favours (for I am always favoured when you are pleased to write to me) by Mr. Walker of the 9th, and by Captain Landacs of the 10th of December, were duly delivered to me by those gentlemen, and, without loss of time, I laid them before Congress, and their applications have been referred to very good committees, so that there is reason to expect, that these gentlemen will receive just and satisfactory determinations from Congress. Your friendly and sensible letter of the 23d of the same month, deserves my sincerest thanks and approbation, which, with great cordiality, I present to you. My ill health, (with much business, and the necessary attention to the ceremonies of my office,) prevents me from being so punctual a correspondent as I wish to be; but I well know, that your goodness will excuse me. It is the part of a friend to advise, and of a well disposed mind to profit from good counsel; I shall certainly endeavour to benefit from your judicious sentiments. Very much it is to be wished, that all who are in authority, discerned with you, that the eyes of the world are upon us; that great expectations are formed from great beginnings, and that wisdom and virtue, can alone satisfy such just expeetations. It is, however, much too correspondent with human nature, to exult beyond measure, and thereby to neglect those duties, which ought to inspire better sentiments; to this cause may, perhaps, be attributed much of the inattention and violence, that have too generally taken place, since the preliminary articles were made known to us. Whether in public or in private life, it seems most becoming wise men, in the time of victory and success, to practise the virtues of magnanimity and justice—to avoid the display of irascible passions, by

effectually "burying the hatchet," as our aborigines express the idea; without this philosophic temper, what would become of mankind, governed as they too generally are, by tyrants, whose caprice forces nations into war? endless carnage, and evil without bounds must be the result. The philanthropy, that I revere and admire in your character, must revolt at the contemplation of it, and I think, that the Christian philanthropy in tenderness for human infirmities, strongly inculcates principles of mutual benefit and forgiveness. These reflections have been created in my mind, by that kind of exultation "beyond measure," which you so wisely deprecate, and which I have seen so much to prevail, as to injure in my idea, that greatness of character which had dignified America in her resistance to British tyranny; for I am not disposed to admit revenge as a just plea for such extravagancies, although a well judged system of measured politics may be admissible. The selfishness and corruption of Europe I have no doubt about; and therefore I wish most sincerely, that our free republics may not suffer themselves to be changed, and wrongfully wrought upon, by the corrupt maxims of policy, that pervade European councils, where artful and refined plausibility is forever called in, to aid the most pernicious designs. It would seem as if there were a general jealousy beyond the water, of the powerful effects to be derived from republican virtue here, and so we hear a constant cry from thence, echoed and re-echoed here, by all expectants from the treasury of the United States, that Congress must have more power; that we cannot be secure and happy, until Congress commands implicitly both purse and sword: so that our confederation must be perpetually changing, to answer sinister views in the greater part, until every fence is thrown down, that was designed to protect and cover the rights of mankind.

It is a melancholy consideration that many wise and good men have, some how or other, fallen in with these ruinous opinions. I think, sir, that the first maxim of a man who loves liberty should be, never to grant to rulers an atom of power that is not most clearly and indispensably necessary for the safety and well being of society. To say that these rulers are revocable and holding their places during pleasure, may not be supposed to design evil for self aggrandizement, is affirming what I cannot easily admit. Look to history, and see how often the liberties of mankind have been oppressed and ruined by the same delusive hopes, and fallacious reasoning. The fact is, that power poisons the mind of its possessor, and aids him to remove the shackles that restrain

it. To be sure, all things human must partake of human infirmity, and therefore the confederation should not be presumptuously called an infallible system for all times and all situations; but though this is true, yet as it is a great and fundamental system of union and security, no change should be admitted until proved to be necessary by the fairest, fullest and most mature experience. Upon these principles I have ever been opposed to the five per cent. impost. My idea is still that of the confederation fixing the sum, apportioning it, and letting every state by its own means and in its own way, faithfully and honestly make its payments. That the now federal mode of apportionment is productive of delay, of great expense, and still liable to frequent change, is certain, and therefore I see no inconvenience in so far altering the confederation as to make the rule of apportionment be upon the numbers, as stated in the recommendation of Congress, upon that subject. But I can never agree, that this body shall dictate the mode of taxation, or that the collection shall in any manner be subject to congressional control. It is said that this will more effectually secure the revenue; but how so? If a spirit prevails to neglect a duty imposed by the confederation, may not the same spirit at any time render abortive acts passed for granting the impost? besides that, we are depending for the payment of our debts upon uncertainty, when the most certain revenues of the state ought to be appropriated to that purpose. Whilst every good man wishes great punctuality to prevail in the payment of debts, he must at the same time condemn and discourage large importations, which impoverish by increasing the balance of trade against us; so that from this system we are to expect our greatest good from our greatest evil! A good physician will tell you that contrary indications of cure threaten danger to human life; and, by a just parity of reason, contrary indications threaten danger to the political body; but happily for us, our political disease admits of simple remedies for its cure, if rightly judged of and wisely practised upon. Let it therefore be the effort of every patriot to encourage a punctual payment of each state's quota of the federal demand, and let the money be found in ways most agreeable to the circumstances of every state. This is the plan of the confederation, and this I own will be mine, until more satisfactory experience has proved its inefficacy. A word more upon the point of our just wishes to be detached from the European politics, and European vices, of course, I wish it most sincerely; but unfortunately, Great Britain is upon our northern quarter, and Spain upon the southern; we are there-

fore compelled to mix with their councils in order to be guarded against their ill designs. I am very happy to hear from my friend Mr. Lovell, that you are in health and spirits, and that you still delight to speak of politics; there is nothing in this life that would give me more happiness than to see and converse with you in Boston; but alas, I fear that my poor state of health will deny me this pleasure; but at all times and in every place, I shall be, dear sir, your most affectionate friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams.

NEW YORK, April 18, 1785.

Dear Sir—I should before this have thanked you for your favour of March 15th, if I had not been in daily expectation that the arrival of the packets would bring us some intelligence from Europe worth communicating to you; the February packet has but just come in after a passage of eight weeks, and neither she or other vessels in short passages, bring us any thing interesting. War or peace in Europe, hangs yet in doubtful balance; both parties arming with assiduity, and nothing determined upon. Mr. John Adams, is sent plenipotentiary to the court of London, and Mr. Jefferson is the minister at Versailles, Dr. Franklin having leave, at his own request, to retire. Returning appearances of good humour, and a proposition first made by the British court, to treat of our differences in London, has induced hopes of an amicable adjustment of disputes. Mr. Gardoque is not arrived, but expected about the last of this month from the Havana, to which place he went from Spain previous to his coming here. If the commenced bickering between Madrid and London on the Musquito shore should go on, we may probably have easier work with both courts in our business with them. I have the honour to enclose you the report of a respectable committee on the subject of selling the western lands, which has not yet been acted upon, though it speedily will. What changes may be made in this plan before it finally passes, cannot yet be told, but probably there will be some. Your idea of settling a state at a time, would most certainly be the wisest and the best, if the excessive rage for taking lands there could be possibly restrained. But really it seems that either Congress must sell quickly, or possession will be so taken as to render doubtful this fine fund for extinguishing the public debt. It has been impossi-

ble to get a vote for more than seven hundred men to garrison all the posts to be fixed in the trans-Alleghanian country, from north to south; a number very inadequate, I fear, to the purpose of even suppressing illegal trespasses upon the western lands. Our friend the Marquis La Fayette, arrived after a short passage, but I believe it was a very boisterous one. Your letter for Mr. Lee I sent after him to Virginia, whither he was returning before I received it. My best respects attend your lady.

I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servt.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

General Washington.

NEW-YORK, May 16th, 1785.

Sir—I thank you for your obliging congratulation on my appointment to the chair of Congress, and I do, with particular pleasure, return my congratulation on your sole appointment as minister of the United States, to so eminently respectable a court as that of his most Christian Majesty. My ill state of health, added to the business and the ceremonies of my office, have hitherto prevented me from paying my respects to you, which certainly would not have been the case if the former of these circumstances had not principally prevented me. Although my health is now better, yet I am very far from being well. I can judge how anxious you must be for minute information of public proceedings in the United States, and of such other matters as your letter imparts a desire to be acquainted with; but, unfortunately, all letters are inspected, and thus the impertinent eye of curiosity may be gratified with such communications as were intended only for you, and which wicked selfishness may make a bad use of. This imposes great restraint, which will remain until Congress shall establish a system of packets and couriers of their own. How detestable is this dishonourable mode of obtaining intelligence. The virtue of Lord Falkland, when secretary of state, would never suffer him to obtain information by such nefarious means. The appointment of Mr. Adams to the court of London will, probably, draw out quickly the sense of Great Britain upon the points in dispute with them. And the authority, given by Congress, to treat with the piratical states will, I hope, accommodate all difference with them, and give future security to our commerce with the south of Europe. I am much obliged to you for the pamphlet. I

think it is greatly to be regretted, that the avaricious monopolizing spirit of commerce and commercial men, should be suffered to interrupt that diffusion of benefits and communication between the human species in different parts of the world, which would, probably, take place if trade were put upon more liberal principles, and less shackled than it is. The first attempt made, by these states, for the trade of the East Indies, was from this city. A ship has gone to and returned from Canton, in fourteen months, with a valuable cargo, and met with the most friendly treatment from the Chinese. Other vessels are gone and soon expected back. The great object with the United States now, is to dispose speedily of the western lands for the discharge of public debt, and a way for this is opened by treaties already made and making with the Indians. Coinage, requisition, and post-offices are also objects of great moment and subjects of discussion. Effectual measures are taken by the assemblies of Virginia and Maryland, and by the former alone, for opening the navigation between the Potomac and James rivers with the western waters. Laws, with suspending clauses, have passed in Virginia for establishing a single post on each river, and for circuit courts. A general assessment for religion is also a subject of much discussion with us. Mr. P. Henry is our governour, and Col. Harrison has lost his election in his own county of James City. Great and general efforts have been made to get into the legislature during the late elections, and I hear that there are many changes. It remains uncertain whether Congress will adjourn or not this year; but as I value extremely your correspondence, your letters for me may always be safely enclosed to the Virginia delegates in Congress, so that whether Congress or the committee of states should be sitting, your letters will reach me safely. Be so good as to thank Mr. Short for his letter to me, and inform him that I will reply by the next packet. I heartily wish your health and happiness, and

I am, with the truest esteem and regard,

Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Mr. JEFFERSON,
Minister Plenipotentiary at the court of Versailles.

NEW YORK, June 11th, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR—I have been lately honoured with your letter of March 16th, from Paris, and I thank you for it; as I feel myself much interested in your happiness, so your letter gave me singular pleasure, when it informed me of your "being well and happy, with your family and friends," and the more so, because a rumor had prevailed, of some accident having happened at sea, to the frigate that carried you from hence. It is with great satisfaction, that I consider any action of my life, that has proved agreeable to you, and I am very sure, that the good you have done for my country, has much more than repaid my attentions to you. I am pleased that you think of coming to see us again; it is certain, that numbers will be made happy here, when ever you are pleased to visit these United States. Much praise is due to those, by whose humanity, and powerful agency, a war in Europe has been prevented, for had it taken place, I apprehend that the evil would have been great and very extensive. It is unfortunate for the friendly intercourse, and general benefit of mankind, that the avaricious spirit of commerce, always aiming at monopoly, should be permitted to interpose such obstructions as too frequently take place in the intercourse of nations, much to the injury of human nature, in general. It seems to me, that whilst the European nations have it in their power, to supply these states so largely with manufactures, that it is unwise to adopt such regulations as cramp the American trade, and thereby render us incapable of purchasing, and paying for, those manufactures in so extensive a manner, as would certainly be done, if commercial restraints were removed; this conduct on the part of Europe tends to injure their manufactures, by lessening their sales, at the same time, that it very much forces the Americans from agriculture to arts, thus rendering scarcer and dearer, the American productions that are wanted in Europe, and lessening the use of European manufactures in America, which it should be the policy of Europe to encourage the use of. It is very obvious, why the merchants of France, have not so great a share of our commerce as they wish; the staple states, or those which have much valuable produce to export, have at present but few ships and seamen of their own, and consequently, do not now export themselves much of their own produce; those nations, therefore, that push the trade with them, by sending ships and merchandise to them, will for the reason above, certainly possess at this time, the greatest share of their trade; so that the fact is, that

the British merchants, are those chiefly, who bring us the cambricks and many other manufactures of France, which the French merchants failed to export themselves, although they might afford to sell them cheaper and better, than the English, and of course drive the latter from this branch of trade at least. The plan for opening the navigation of the western waters, goes on well—already more than 40,000 pounds are subscribed for opening the Potomac, and General Washington, is chosen president of the society, that superintends that business. The settling a mode for surveying and selling the fine country, north-west of Ohio river, for the purpose of discharging our public debt, is an object that hath engaged much attention of Congress, and promises, we think, in due season, to remove the debts created by the last war. Mr. Gardoque, from Spain, is arrived at Philadelphia, and we daily expect him in this city; it is to be hoped, that the good sense and honour of his court, will finally settle into such measures, as are just and reasonable. I have the honour to be, my dear sir, with sentiments of the truest affection, esteem and regard,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Marquis De la Fayette, at Paris.

NEW YORK, October 23d, 1785.

Dear Sir—I received the letter, that you did me the honour to write me, on the 15th July, with the pleasure that always accompanies the receipt of letters, from my old and much esteemed friend. I see with pleasure, that your reception at the court of London, has been such, as to promise you an agreeable residence there, which may be somewhat pleasant, although you should unfortunately fail in the principal objects of your mission; this last, however, I yet hope will not be the case, since you represent the majority of the ministry, as able, and thinking rightly with respect to us. The national mind, cannot continue long under the delusion, created by the most vindictive and abominable characters in the world. I mean the tory refugees, who by themselves, and by those, who for sinister purposes, have suffered themselves to be imposed on by those people, are industriously keeping up on both sides of the water, a contentious and mischievous spirit, to the great hurt of both countries. We know them here, and by this time, they ought to be known in England, to which country, they have caused by their misrepresenta-

tion, such infinite evil. In the mind of a person acquainted with the true state of things, there can remain no doubt, but that this moment is the most favourable one that will probably occur again, for Great Britain, to make a favourable treaty of commerce with these United States. The events that took place immediately succeeding the war, and which have produced such wrong conclusions, touching the British secure possession of our commerce, cannot prevent our trade from going, as it is fast proceeding to do, into other channels, where it is driven, by the mistaken discouragements that are imposed by Britain. I have myself no doubt, but that smart duties of tonnage will be laid by all the states, on the vessels of those nations with whom we have not commercial treaties, and that such will be prohibited, from importing into our ports, productions or manufactures, not the growth or manufacture, of the country importing them; thus, those states, forced into it by the folly and intemperance of Great Britain, and led by her example, will be forming laws to discourage a commerce which might be so mutually beneficial, if wisdom and temper, were to take place of passion and folly. The project of a treaty, proposed by you, to the court where you are, is so perfectly just, and will be so greatly beneficial to both, that I cannot help hoping, it will yet be agreed to. I am greatly obliged to you, for your goodness, respecting Mr. Steptoe, and I entreat, that you will so have him in your mind, as, that you may effectually promote his views, whensoever an opportunity will present. Much harmony has prevailed this year in Congress, and I hope, that the same concord will continue. The present federal year, being on the point of ending, I shall return to Virginia, and as I mentioned in a former letter, you may write very securely to me, under the care of Messrs. Wallace, Johnston, and Muir, merchants in London, who will safely forward your letters. I am, with the most sincere and perfect esteem and regard, sir, your most obliged friend, and obedient humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. JOHN ADAMS, Esq.
Minister Plenipo. to the Court of London.

NEW-YORK, 30th October, 1785.

I thank you, my dear marquis, for your very affectionate letter, by Mr. Houdon; that gentleman arrived in Philadelphia, and proceeded immediately to Mount Vernon; he

has been ever since with General Washington, so that I have not yet had the pleasure of seeing him in this city. It is very happy for America, that events of such high importance should have taken place here as to invite artists, of Mr. Houdon's great reputation, to visit us. I hope that he will find every thing here agreeable to his wishes. As I take strong part in every thing that conduces to your happiness, so I have contemplated with pleasure, the great satisfaction you must have received at the review of those excellent troops of the emperor and of Prussia. A philosophic mind is apt, however, to regret that such fine exertions of human art should so often be employed for the destruction of the human species. I will comfort myself here by hoping, that these will be used to suppress and control, not to promote the bad purposes of ambition. It raises high the glory of Louis the Sixteenth, that his reign has been so eminent for promoting the good of mankind, whilst sovereigns in general, employ their power to increase the miseries of human nature! Will it not happen, during the reign of this glorious monarch, that those lawless pirates, upon the African coast of the Mediterranean, will be compelled, by some proper system, to respect the rights of men, and the laws of nations, instead of receiving annual stipends for not doing what it is really infamous to do. I mean roaming about to injure, oppress, and destroy, their unoffending fellow creatures. Among the many leagues that are formed, why may not one be made for the purpose of protecting the rights of humanity. I hope, sir, that you have not forgotten your design, again to make us happy, by your return to these United States.

I have the honour to be, with sentiments of the highest affection and friendship, my dear marquis,

Your most ob't and very humble serv't.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Marquis De La Fayette.

CHANTILLY, Virginia, December 3d, 1785.

Dear Sir—It is with great pleasure that I embrace this opportunity of saluting you, by my friend and relation Colonel Henry Lee, who is going to Congress, a member of that body. I hope he will find you in good health, and still growing better, for I am sure that it will conduce much to the good of Spain, and this country, that his Catholic majesty should continue to be represented here by a gentleman who has so good a knowledge of both countries, with so candid a

desire to benefit both by the knowledge he possesses. My return to Congress, in the course of the coming year, will depend so much upon the state of my health, that I dare not say yet, how it will be; but, certainly, it will add much to my happiness to have the pleasure of seeing you again. I pray God to bless you long with health and every happiness; and being, with considerations of the highest respect and esteem, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency Don Diego de Gardoque,
Plenipotentiary encargo do de negotior,
of his Catholic majesty, to the United States.

CHANTILLY, March 5th, 1786.

Sir—It is certainly true that a *popular government* cannot flourish without *virtue* in the people, and it is as true that *knowledge* is a principal source of virtue; these facts render the establishment of schools, for the instruction of youth, a fundamental concern in all free communities. I wish that it had been made a primary duty of the legislature, by our constitution, as it has been wisely done by some of the states in this union. Such establishments will be the surest means of perpetuating our free forms of government, for, when men are taught to know, and well to understand, the great inherent rights of human nature, they will take care not to suffer the hands of vice, of violence, or of ignorance, to rob them of such inestimable blessings. You may suppose, sir, that, with these sentiments, I see with pleasure every attempt to establish seminaries of learning, and that my endeavours shall not be wanting to promote the laudable purpose, by every means in my power. You say there are several beautiful situations on Spicer's tenement, for the purpose of the proposed academy, and that he is willing to part with any two acres for that use. I do hereby, sir, declare to you, and assure the other gentlemen concerned with you in the establishment of this academy, that whenever Randall Spicer's consent for this purpose, shall be tendered me in writing, and a fee simple deed be offered me to sign, for conveying a clear and effectual fee simple right in any such two acres, for the sole use of a public school, or seminary of learning, and for no other use or purpose whatsoever, I will sign and execute such deed with pleasure, and desire

no other gratuity but the satisfaction that I shall receive in knowing the salutary effects that will be derived to the good people of Fauquier in particular, and the community in general, from so useful an establishment. With my respects to all the gentlemen concerned in this praiseworthy business, I remain, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Colonel MARTIN PICKETT, Fauquier.

CHANTILLY, May 15th, 1787.

DEAR SIR—It has given me much pleasure to be informed that General Washington and yourself, have gone to the convention. We may hope, from such efforts, that alterations beneficial will take place in our federal constitution, if it shall be found, on deliberate inquiry, that the evils now felt do flow from errors in that constitution; but, alas! sir, I fear it is more in vicious manners, than mistakes in form, that we must seek for the causes of the present discontent. The present causes of complaint seem to be, that Congress cannot command the money necessary for the just purposes of paying debts, or for supporting the federal government; and that they cannot make treaties of commerce, unless power unlimited, of regulating trade, be given. The confederation now gives right to name the sums necessary, and to apportion the quotas by a rule established. This rule is, unfortunately, very difficult of execution, and, therefore, the recommendations of Congress on this subject, have not been made in federal mode; so that states have thought themselves justified in non-compliance. If the rule were plain and easy, and refusal were then to follow demand, I see clearly, that no form of government whatever, short of force, will answer; for the same want of principle that produces neglect now, will do so under any change not supported by power compulsory; the difficulty certainly is, how to give this power in such manner as that it may only be used to good, and not abused to bad, purposes. Whoever shall solve this difficulty will receive the thanks of this and future generations. With respect to the want of power to make treaties of trade, for want of legislation, to regulate the general commerce, it appears to me, that the right of making treaties, and the legislative power contended for, are essentially different things; the former may be given and executed, without the danger attending upon the states parting with their legisla-

tive authority, in the instance contended for. If the third paragraph of the sixth article were altered, by striking out the words, in pursuance of any treaties already proposed by Congress, to the courts of France and Spain; and the proviso stricken out of the first section in the ninth article, Congress would then have a complete and unlimited right of making treaties of all kinds, and, so far, I really think it both right and necessary; but this is very different from, and in danger far short of, giving an exclusive power of regulating trade. A minister of Congress may go to a foreign court with full power to make a commercial treaty; but if he were to propose to such court that the eight northern states in this union, should have the exclusive right of carrying the products of the five southern states, or of supplying these states with foreign articles; such a proposition of monopoly would be rejected; and, therefore, no danger here from the power of making treaty; but a legislative right to regulate trade through the states, may, in a thousand artful modes, be so abused as to produce the monopoly aforesaid, to the extreme oppression of the staple states, as they are called. I do not say that this would be done, but I contend that it might be done; and, where interest powerfully prompts, it is greatly to be feared that it would be done. Whoever has served long in Congress, knows, that the restraint of making the consent of nine states necessary, is feeble and incompetent. Some will sometimes sleep, and some will be negligent, but it is certain that improper power not given, cannot be improperly used. The human mind is too apt to rush from one extreme to another; it appears, by the objections that came from the different states, when the confederation was submitted for consideration, that the universal apprehension was, of the too great, not the defective powers of Congress. Whence this immense change of sentiment, in a few years? for now the cry is power, give Congress power. Without reflecting that every free nation, that hath ever existed, has lost its liberty by the same rash impatience, and want of necessary caution. I am glad, however, to find, on this occasion, that so many gentlemen, of competent years, are sent to the convention, for, certainly, "youth is the season of credulity, and confidence a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom." The states have been so unpardonably remiss, in furnishing their federal quotas, as to make impost necessary, for a term of time, with a provisional security, that the money arising shall be unchangeably applied to the payment of their public debts: that accounts of the application, shall be annually sent to each state; and the collecting officers appointed by,

and be amenable to the states: or, if not so, very strong preventives and correctives of official abuse and misconduct, interpose, to shield the people from oppression. Give me leave, sir, to detain you a moment longer, with a proposition that I have not heard mentioned. It is that the right of making paper money shall be exclusively vested in Congress; such a right will be clearly within the spirit of the fourth section of the ninth article of the present confederation. This appears to me, to be a restraint of the last importance to the peace and happiness of the Union, and of every part of it. Knaves assure, and fools believe, that calling paper money, and making it tender, is the way to be rich and happy; thus the national mind is kept in constant ferment; and the public councils in continual disturbance by the intrigues of wicked men, for fraudulent purposes, for speculating designs. This would be a great step towards correcting morals, and suppressing legislative frauds, which, of all frauds, is the most fatal to society. Do you not think, sir, that it ought to be declared, by the new system, that any state act of legislation that shall contravene, or oppose, the authorized acts of Congress, or interfere with the expressed rights of that body, shall be *ipso facto* void, and of no force whatsoever. My respects, if you please, to your brethren of the convention, from this state, and pardon me for the liberty I have taken of troubling you with my sentiments on the interesting business that calls you to Philadelphia. I have the honour to be, with affectionate esteem and regard,

Your friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

GEORGE MASON, Esq.

NEW YORK, July 28, 1787.

SIR—Your brother transmitted to me the valuable present that you were pleased to make me of your excellent book on the diseases of seamen, which I have read with much pleasure and instruction. It is certainly a business of great philanthropy to contribute to the health and ease of so valuable and so exposed a part of our species. I pray you, sir, to accept of my thanks for your politeness, and give me leave to assure you, that I am with much esteem and regard, sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Dr. BLANE, Physician to his royal highness
the Prince of Wales, &c. &c. &c.

NEW YORK, October 5, 1787.

DEAR SIR—Having long toiled with you, my dear friend, in the vineyard of liberty, I do with great pleasure submit to your wisdom and patriotism, the objections that prevail in my mind against the new constitution proposed for federal government: which objections I did propose to Congress in form of amendments to be discussed, and such as were approved, to be forwarded to the states with the convention system. You will have been informed, by other hands, why these amendments were not considered and do not appear on the journals, and the reasons that influenced a bare transmission of the convention plan, without a syllable of approbation or disapprobation on the part of Congress. I suppose, my dear sir, that the people of the United States, in their late generous contests, contended for free government in the fullest, clearest, and strongest sense; that they had no idea of being brought under despotic rule, under the notion of strong government, or in form of elective despotism; chains being still chains, whether made of gold or iron.

The corrupting nature of power and its insatiable appetite for increase, has proved the necessity, and procured the adoption of the strongest and most express declarations of that *residuum* of natural rights, which is not intended to be given up to society, and which indeed is not necessary to be given for any good social purpose. In a government, therefore, where the power of judging what shall be for the general welfare, which goes to every object of human legislation, and where the laws of such judges shall be the supreme law of the land, it seems to be of the last consequence to declare, in most explicit terms, the reservations above alluded to; so much for the propriety of a bill of rights as a necessary bottom to this new system. It is in vain to say, that the defects in this new constitution may be remedied by the legislature created by it. The remedy, as it may, so it may not, be applied; and if it should, a subsequent assembly may repeal the acts of its predecessor; for the parliamentary doctrine is "quod leges posteriores priores contrarias abrogant" 4 Inst. 43. Surely this is not a ground upon which a wise and good man would choose to rest the dearest rights of human nature. Indeed, some capital defects are not within the compass of legislative redress. The oligarchic tendency from the combination of president, vice president, and senate, is a ruin not within legislative remedy; nor is the partial right of voting in the senate, or the defective numbers in the house of representatives. It is of little consequence to say that the num-

bers in the last mentioned assembly will increase with the population of these states, because what may happen in twenty-five or twenty-seven years hence is poor alleviation of evils that the intermediate time is big with: for it often happens that abuse, under the name of use, is riveted upon mankind. Nor can a good reason be assigned, for establishing a bad instead of a good government, in the first instance, because time may amend the bad. Men do not choose to be sick because it may happen that physic may cure them. Suppose that good men come first to the administration of this government, and that they should see, or think they see a necessity for trying criminally a man without giving him his jury of the vicinage; or that the freedom of the press should be restrained because it disturbed the operations of the new government; the mutilation of the jury trial, and the restraint of the press would then follow for good purposes as it should seem, and by good men; but these precedents will be followed by bad men, to sacrifice honest and innocent men, and to suppress the exertions of the press for wicked and tyrannic purposes; it being certainly true that "omnia mala exempla ex bonis orta sunt: sed ubi imperium ad ignaros aut minus bonos pervenit, novum illud exemplum ab dignis et idoneis ad indignos et non idoneos fertur." In proof of this, we know that the great and good Lord Holt, to support King William and revolution principles, produced doctrines in a case of libel (King against Bear) subversive both of law and sound reason, which his successor, Lord Mansfield, in the case of Woodfall, would have availed himself of for the restraint of the press and the ruin of liberty. It would appear therefore, that the consideration of human precocity renders it necessary for human safety, that in the first place power not requisite should not be given; and in the next place that necessary powers should be carefully guarded; how far this is done in the new constitution I submit to your wise and attentive consideration; whether for the present it may not be sufficient so to alter the confederation as to allow Congress full liberty to make treaties by removing the restraining causes and giving the impost for a limited time, with power of regulating trade, is a question that deserves to be considered. But I think that the new constitution (properly amended) as it contains many good regulations, might be admitted. And why may not such indispensable amendments be proposed by the conventions, and returned with the new plan to Congress, that a new general convention may so weave them into the proffered system as that a web may be produced fit for freemen to wear? If such amendments were proposed by a capital state or two,

and a willingness expressed to agree with the plan so amended, I cannot see why it may not be effected. It is a mere begging the question to suppose, as some do, that only this moment and this measure will do. But why so, there being no war or violence, external or internal, to prevent due deliberation on this momentous business. The public papers will inform you of what violence has been practised by the agitators of this new system in Philadelphia, to drive on its immediate adoption, as if the subject of government were a business of passion, instead of cool, sober, and intense consideration.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. SAMUEL ADAMS, in Boston.

NEW-YORK, Oct. 11, 1787.

DEAR SIR—I was unwilling to interrupt your attention to more important affairs at Philadelphia, by sending there an acknowledgment of the letter that you were pleased to honour me with from that city, especially as this place afforded nothing worthy of your notice. We have the pleasure to see the first act of Congress, for selling federal lands north-west of Ohio, becoming productive very fast. A large sum of public securities being already paid in upon the first sales, and a new contract, with a company in New-Jersey, for the lands between the two Miamis, that will rid us of at least two millions more of the public debt, is ordered to be made. There is good reason to suppose, that, by the next spring, we shall have reduced the domestic debt near six millions of dollars, and it seems clear that the lands yet to be disposed of, if well managed, will sink the whole thirty millions that are due. The assiduity with which the court of London is courting that of Spain, for the conclusion of a commercial treaty between these powers, renders it a signal misfortune that we have not been able to get a sufficient number of the states together, to produce a conclusion of our treaty with Spain, there being now no doubt, but that if the thirteen were present, ten, at least, would approve the proposed treaty. If Virginia did not stand alone, she would only have North Carolina and Georgia to join her. The state of Europe, with respect to the continuance of peace, still hangs in doubtful balance. The financial weakness of France and Great Britain most strongly opposes war, yet the state of things is such as renders it very questionable, whether even that difficulty,

great as it is, will secure the continuance of peace. It is under the strongest impressions of your goodness and candour, that I venture to make the observations that follow in this letter, assuring you that I feel it among the first distresses that have happened to me in my life, that I find myself compelled, by an irresistible conviction of mind, to doubt about the new system for federal government recommended by the late convention. It is, sir, in consequence of long reflection, upon the nature of man and of government, that I am led to fear the danger that will ensue to civil liberty, from the adoption of the new system in its present form. I am fully sensible of the propriety of change in the present plan of confederation, and although there may be difficulties, not inconsiderable, in procuring an adoption of such amendments to the convention system as will give security to the just rights of human nature, and better secure from injury the discordant interests of the different parts of this Union, yet I hope that those difficulties are not insurmountable, since we, happily, are uninterrupted by external war, or by such internal discords as can prevent fair discussion, in another convention, of those objections that are fundamentally strong against the new constitution, which abounds with useful regulations. There is so great a part of the business already well done, that such alterations, as must (I think) give very general content, could not long employ another convention, when provided with the sense of the different states upon those alterations. I am much inclined to think that the amendments, which are generally called for, will be found to be of such a nature as, though they do not oppose the exercise of a very competent federal power, are yet such as the best theories of government, and the best practice upon those theories have found necessary; at the same time that they are such as the opinions of our people have for ages been founded on. It would be unnecessary for me here to enumerate particulars, as I expect to have the honour of waiting upon you at Mount Vernon, on my way home early in November. In the mean time,

I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Gen. Washington.

NEW-YORK, Oct. 16th, 1787.

DEAR SIR—I was duly honoured with your favour of September 17th, from *Philadelphia*, which should have been acknowledged long before now, if the nature of the business it related to had not required time. The establishment of the new plan of government, in its present form, is a question that involves such immense consequences, to the present times and to posterity, that it calls for the deepest attention of the best and wisest friends of their country and mankind. If it be found right, after mature deliberation, adopt it; if wrong, amend it at all events: for to say that a bad government must be established for fear of anarchy, is really saying that we should kill ourselves for fear of dying! Experience, and the actual state of things, show that there is no difficulty in procuring a general convention, the late one having been collected without any obstruction; nor does external war, or internal discord, prevent the most cool, collected, full, and fair discussion of this all-important subject. If, with infinite ease, a convention was obtained to prepare a system, why may not another convention, with equal ease, be obtained to make proper and necessary amendments? Good government is not the work of short time, or of sudden thought. From Moses to Montesquieu the greatest geniuses have been employed on this difficult subject, and yet experience has shown capital defects in the systems produced for the government of mankind. But since it is neither prudent nor easy to make frequent changes in government, and as bad governments have been generally found the most fixed, so it becomes of the last importance to frame the first establishment upon grounds the most unexceptionable, and such as the best theories with experience justify; not trusting, as our new constitution does, and as many approve of doing, to time and future events to correct errors that both reason and experience, in similar cases, now prove to exist in the new system. It has hitherto been supposed a fundamental truth that, in governments rightly balanced, the different branches of legislature should be unconnected, and that the legislative and executive powers should be separate. In the new constitution, the president and senate have all the executive and two-thirds of the legislative; and in some weighty instances (as making all kinds of treaties which are to be the laws of the land) they have the whole legislative and executive powers. They jointly appoint all officers, civil and military, and they (the senate) try all impeachments, either of their own members or of the officers appointed by themselves. Is there not a most formi-

dable combination of power thus created in a few? and can the most critical eye, if a candid one, discover responsibility in this potent corps? or will any sensible man say that great power, without responsibility, can be given to rulers with safety to liberty? It is most clear that the parade of impeachment is nothing to them, or any of them, as little restraint is to be found, I presume, from the fear of offending constituents.

The president is of four years duration, and Virginia (for example) has one vote, out of thirteen, in the choice of him. The senate is a body of six years duration, and as, in the choice of president, the largest state has but a thirteenth part, so is it in the choice of senators; and this thirteenth vote, not of the people, but of electors, two removes from the people. This latter statement is adduced to show that responsibility is as little to be apprehended from amenability to constituents, as from the terror of impeachment. You are, therefore, sir, well warranted in saying that either a monarchy or aristocracy will be generated: perhaps the most grievous system of government may arise! It cannot be denied, with truth, that this new constitution is, in its first principles, most highly and dangerously oligarchic; and it is a point agreed that a government of the few is, of all governments, the worst. The only check to be found in favour of the democratic principle, in this system, is the House of Representatives, which, I believe, may justly be called a mere shred or rag of representation, it being obvious, to the least examination, that smallness of number, and great comparative disparity of power, renders that house of little effect to promote good, or restrain bad government. But what is the power given to this ill-constructed body? To judge of what may be for the *general welfare*, and such judgment, when made that of Congress, is to be *the supreme law of the land*. This seems to be a power co-extensive with every possible object of human legislation. Yet there is no restraint, in form of a bill of rights, to secure (what Dr. Blackstone calls) that residuum of human rights which is not meant to be given up to society, and which, indeed, is not necessary to be given for any good social purpose. The rights of conscience, the freedom of the press, and the trial by jury, are at mercy. It is, indeed, stated that, in criminal cases, the trial shall be by jury; but how? in the state? What then becomes of the jury of the vicinage, or, at least, from the county in the first instance; for the states being from fifty to seven hundred miles in extent, this mode of trial, even in criminal cases, may be greatly impaired; and in civil cases the inference is strong,

that it may be altogether omitted, as the constitution positively assumes it in criminal, and is silent about it in civil causes. Nay, it is more strongly discountenanced in civil cases, by giving the supreme court, in case of appeal, jurisdiction, both as to law and fact. Judge Blackstone, in his learned commentaries, (article Jury Trial,) says, it is the most transcendant privilege which any subject can enjoy, or wish for, that he cannot be affected either in his property, his liberty, or his person, but by the unanimous consent of twelve of his neighbours and equals. A constitution, that I may venture to affirm, has, under providence, secured the just liberties of this nation for a long succession of ages; the impartial administration of justice, which secures both our persons and our properties, is the great end of civil society. But if that be entirely trusted to the magistracy, a select body of men, and those generally selected by the prince, *or such as enjoy the highest offices of the state*, their decisions, in spite of their own natural integrity, will have frequently an involuntary bias towards those of their own rank and dignity. It is not to be expected, from human nature, that the *few* should be always attentive to the good of the many. The learned judge further says, that "every new tribunal, erected for the decision of *facts*, is a step towards establishing aristocracy, the most oppressive of all governments." The answer to these objections is, that the new legislature may provide remedies! But as they may, so they may not, and if they did, a succeeding assembly may repeal the provisions. The evil is found resting upon constitutional bottom, and the remedy upon the mutable ground of legislation, revocable at every annual meeting. It is the more unfortunate that this great security of human rights, the trial by jury, should be weakened in this system, as power is unnecessarily given, in the second section of the third article, to call people from their own country, in all cases of controversy about property between citizens of different states and foreigners, to be tried in a distant court where the Congress may sit; for although inferior congressional courts *may*, for the above purpose, be instituted in the different states, yet this is a matter altogether in the pleasure of the new legislature; so that if they please not to institute them, or if they do not regulate the right of appeal, the people will be exposed to endless oppression, and the necessity of submitting to pay unjust demands rather than follow suitors, through great expense, to far distant tribunals, and to be determined upon there, as it may be, without a jury. In this congressional legislature a bare majority can enact commercial laws, so that the representatives of the seven northern

states, as they will have a majority, can, by law, create the most oppressive monopolies upon the five southern states, whose circumstances and productions are essentially different from theirs, although not a single man of their voters are the representatives of, or amenable to, the people of the southern states. Can such a set of men be, with the least colour of truth, called representatives of those they make laws for? It is supposed that the policy of the northern states will prevent such abuses! but how feeble, sir, is *policy* when opposed to interest among trading people, and what is the restraint arising from policy? It is said that we may be forced, by abuse, to become ship-builders; but how long will it be before a people of agriculture can produce ships sufficient to export such bulky and such extensive commodities as ours; and if we had the ships, from whence are the seamen to come? four thousand of whom, at least, we shall want in Virginia. In questions so liable to abuses, why was not the necessary vote put to two-thirds of the members of the legislature? Upon the whole, sir, my opinion is, that, as this constitution abounds with useful reglations, at the same time that it is liable to strong and fundamental objections, the plan for us to pursue will be to propose the necessary amendments, and express our willingness to adopt it with the amendments; and to suggest the calling a new convention for the purpose of considering them. To this I see no well-founded objection, but great safety and much good to be the probable result. I am perfectly satisfied that you make such use of this letter as you shall think to be for the public good. And now, after begging your pardon for so great a trespass on your patience, and presenting my best respects to your lady, I will conclude with assuring you that

I am, with the sincerest esteem and regard,
dear sir,
Your most affectionate and obedient servant,
RICHARD HENRY LEE.

His Excellency,
Gov. Randolph.

NEW YORK, October 27th, 1787.

My dear Friend—Our mutual friend, Mr. Gerry, furnishes me with an opportunity of writing to you, without danger of my letter being stopt on its passage, as, I have some reason to apprehend, has been the case with letters written by me, and sent by post. Under this impression, it

is, that I send you, herewith, a copy of my letter to you, of the 5th of this month. Major Sergeant delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me, on the 8th instant, by which, I see that you suppose me to have been a member of the late convention. I did early decline being of that body, because I was a member of Congress, and the plan proposed, was, that Congress should revise, and, if they approved, transmit the proposed *amendments to the confederation*, (for that was the idea, and, indeed, the only idea, that the present federal plan admits of, or that the powers delegated to the convention countenanced,) to the thirteen states, for approbation and ratification. In this state, it appeared to me an inconsistency that the same men should, at New York, revise their own doings at Philadelphia; and this opinion was fully verified, when the members of convention came to Congress, in such numbers, with their own plan; that the votes of three states were convention votes, two others decided by conventions, and conventioners mingled with many other states. It is, sir, most obvious, that the system of the convention could not have a dispassionate and impartial review in Congress; nor, indeed, had it. In my letter to you, above alluded to, I sent you the amendments that I proposed in Congress, and hinted at the reasons that prevented them from appearing on the journal. If they, with my letter, should have miscarried, our friend, Mr. Gerry, can furnish you with them. Mr. Wilson, of Philadelphia, has appeared in print with the convention reasons, in support of their proffered plan; how he has succeeded, Mr. Gerry will inform you. The press has produced such manly and well reasoned refutation of him and his system, that both have lost ground amazingly, in the public estimation. His principal sophism is, that bills of right were necessary in the state constitutions, because every thing, not reserved, was given to the state legislature; but, in the federal government, every thing was reserved that was not given to the federal legislature. This is clearly a distinction without difference, because, independent states are in the same relation to each other, as individuals are with respect to uncreated governments; so that, if reservations were necessary in one case, they are equally necessary in the other; but the futility of this distinction appears from the conduct of the convention itself, for they have made several reservations, every one of which, proves the rule, in conventional idea, to be, that what was not reserved was given. For example, they have reserved from their legislature a power to prevent the importations of negroes, for twenty years, and

also from creating titles; but they have no reservation in favour of the press, rights of conscience, trial by jury in civil cases, or common law securities; as if these were of less importance to the happiness of mankind, than the making of lords, or the importation of slaves! the essential defects in the *construction* of the legislature, and the dangerous blending of the legislative powers with the executive, so as to prevent all responsibility, are such radical objections as render this plan inadmissible, without amendments, in my idea. The Baron Montesquieu says, "that the English is the only nation in the world where political or civil liberty is the direct end of its constitution." I once thought that our free governments were entitled to the same eulogium; but the system under consideration, seems to have reversed the above idea; the acquisition of power unlimited, not the security of civil liberty, appears to be the object. Arbitrary government is, indeed, so carefully entrenched and barricaded against democratic influences, that I am very much mistaken if civil liberty does not expire under its operation. The friends of just liberty here, are astonished at the occlusion of the press in Boston, at a season so momentous to mankind. It is thought to auger ill of the new government proposed, that, on its being first ushered into the world, it should destroy the great palladium of human rights; and at Boston too, where presses first taught America to resist attempts upon her liberty and rights: there to find the great organ of free communication stopped, when that was under consideration, which, of all sublunary things, demands the freest and fullest discussion, government, upon the goodness and badness of which, almost depends whether we shall rank among men or beasts. When you are pleased to write to me, your letter, by being enclosed to our friend, Mr. Osgood, of the treasury, here, will be safely forwarded to me in Virginia, for which place I shall set out from hence on the first of next month. My best respects to your lady, and I pray to be remembered to General Warren, Mr. Lovell, and Doctor Holtern. I am, dear sir, most sincerely and affectionately,

Your friend,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Samuel Adams, of Boston.

CHANTILLY, February 26, 1788.

DEAR SIR—Captain Merry delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me, on the 11th instant, in which I find you propose the following questions, relative to the new constitution, proposed by the late general convention, and request my answer to them:

First. Whether the United States had not better receive than reject the said constitution?

Secondly. Whether it would not injure our credit in the European world, if we were to dissent therefrom; and whether our country would not thereby be endangered, as there are large demands in Europe against us?

Thirdly. Whether every objection to the plan may not, by instructions from the different states, be made as soon as the said Congress may be assembled?

Fourthly. Whether ruin would await us, unless we are consolidated in one general plan of government?

To the first question, namely, "Whether the United States," &c. I answer, that this question implies a *necessity* of either adopting or rejecting. But I know of no power on earth that has, or ever had, a right to propose such a question of extremity to the people, or any part of the people, of the United States. The happiness or misery of mankind depends so essentially upon government, that, when this is to be established by the people for themselves and their posterity, the right of the people cannot be questioned, of so acting with plans proposed, as to adopt them, reject them, or propose amendments to them.

To the second query, "Whether it would not injure," &c. I reply, that this second question is much founded on the first; and, so far as it is, may receive the same answer. It is divisible into two parts; the first, shall our credit be injured in Europe by *dissenting* from the proposed plan? It is presumable, that credit abroad depends much upon union and happiness at home, as it must always greatly do upon that industry and real strength which grows out of the possession of civil liberty. Those, therefore, who contend for the new plan, by propounding such a question, should prove, in the first place, that the adoption of this constitution will secure union and happiness at home, and those valuable consequences that flow from the possession of civil liberty; and this is the more necessary, as there are such numbers who think that the proffered plan, if admitted without amendments, will empower the administrators of the new government to destroy civil liberty. The second part of this ques-

tion is, whether our country will not be endangered by a *dissent*, as there are large demands against us in Europe." I presume that foreigners have no business with the nature of our government. Payment of their debts they are entitled to, but no possible reason can be assigned, why these debts may not as well be paid if the proposed constitution was to be so amended, as to secure the just rights and liberties of the people from violation, by a proper bill of rights; to retain the trial by jury in all cases, civil as well as criminal, as directed by the common law; to secure the rights of conscience, and freedom of the press. Will France, Holland, or Spain, be disturbed at our retaining these valuable privileges? or, will they quarrel with us for so amending this new plan, as to put it out of the power of the new rulers to carry every citizen of the state, by way of appeal, to be tried for every suit for debt, brought by all others than our own state citizens, in the supreme federal court, where distance and expense may ruin multitudes? Have foreigners any thing to do with our amending the proposed constitution, so as to put it out of the power of the rulers under it, to garble elections, by ordering all the elections of any state to be held at any place they shall choose—at Cape Henry, for instance, if they so please at any time. See section fourth, article first, where they have power over time, place, and manner of holding elections for choosing representatives, without restraint or limitation.

To the third query, "Whether every objection," &c. I answer, that the constitution containing these objections, is made by the people of the United States; "and the removal of them by the Congress, would only be a common act of legislation, which may be revoked and repealed by every subsequent meeting of the Congress. So that the power of oppressing will be founded on the strong and lasting ground of a constitution made by the people of the United States, and the remedies (if the new rulers should ever please to declare any,) will rest on feeble and changeable acts of a common legislature. Can it be safe or prudent to suffer this? As for instructions, it is to be remarked, that the senators are chosen by the legislature of the states, and the representatives by all the freeholders—to instruct one, and not both branches of the new legislature, would be doing nothing; and to render instructions of use, the general assembly, and the freeholders of the community, must unite. The almost impossibility of procuring such a union from the majority of the United States, is too obvious, not to show the very little dependence that should be put on such instructions. And, after all, the

result could only be a legislative and mutable act against a fixed constitution. But how absurd would it be for the people to agree to a constitutional evil to-day, and to-morrow call for a legislative redress of that evil!

The fourth and last question, "Whether ruin would await us," &c. I am clearly of opinion, that our greater strength, safety, and happiness, depends on our union; but I am as clear that this union had infinitely better be on principles that give security to the just rights and liberties of mankind, than on such principles as permit rulers to destroy them. Thus, sir, I hope that I have fully, and to your satisfaction, answered your several questions: so that you may think yourself warranted, if not bound to be a friend to amendments that should be constitutional. To trust to future events for remedy of evils that we have ourselves once created, is like choosing to be sick, because a doctor may possibly cure us! A very capital defect in this new project is, that the executive and legislative powers are so blended and united, as to remove all chance for responsibility; and to possess man with very great powers, without making him easily answerable for an abuse of these powers, is, in my opinion, neither safe nor wise. I am glad to hear that Colonel Barbour stands for the convention. It is many years ago since I saw his conduct in the legislature, and observed it to be both sensible and honest. I have been obliged to write in haste, so that you may be sure this letter is not intended for the press.

I am, &c.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

JAMES GORDEN, jun. Esq.

CHANTILLY, in Virginia, April 28th, 1788.

MY DEAR SIR—Your favour of December 3d, in the last year, reached me the last of January following, and it should have been answered with my thanks long since, if the uncommon badness of the winter, stopping all communication, had not prevented. Your sentiments on the new political structure, are, in my mind, strong and just. Both reason and experience prove, that so extensive a territory as that of the United States, including such a variety of climates, productions, interests; and so great difference of manners, habits, and customs; cannot be governed in freedom—until formed into states, sovereign, *sub modo*, and confederated for the common good. In the latter case, opinion founded on the

knowledge of those who govern, procures obedience without force. But remove the opinion, which must fall with a knowledge of characters in so widely extended a country, and force then becomes necessary to secure the purposes of civil government; hence the military array at Kamtschatka, at Petersburg, and through every part of the widely extended Russian empire. Thus force, the parent and the support of tyranny, is demanded for good purposes, although for ever abused to bad ones—that a consolidated, and not a federal government, was the design of *some*, who formed this new project, I have no doubt about. The dazzling ideas of glory, wealth, and power uncontrolled, unfettered by popular opinions, are powerful to captivate the ambitious and the avaricious. With such people, obedience resulting from fear, the offspring of force, is preferable to obedience flowing from esteem and confidence, the legitimate offspring of the knowledge that men have of wisdom and virtue in their governors; and, above all, from the conviction that abuses may be rectified by the substantial checks that political freedom furnish. Massachusetts, I see, has adopted the plan; but proposes to insist perseveringly on amendments. If it were permitted an individual to question so enlightened an assembly, I would ask, why submit to a system requiring such amendments, and trust to creatures of our own creation, for the correcting of evils in it that threaten the destruction of those ends for which the system was formed? The fear of greater evils has been stated: but I cannot help considering such fears as being generated by design upon weakness. The objections to the present system, if accurately considered, will, I believe, be found to grow out of those temporary pressures, created by a long and expensive war, which time and prudence may remove. But, though it were admitted that some amendments to the present confederation would better promote the ends designed by it, why, for that reason, exterminate the present plan, and establish on its ruins another, so replete with power, danger, and hydra-headed mischief? The Massachusetts amendments are good, so far as they go. The first, third, and fourth amendments are well contrived to keep in existence the state sovereignties; and the first particularly proper for securing liberty from the abuse of construction, which the new plan most amply admits of. But why, my dear friend, was the provision in your seventh proposition of amendment, confined to causes between citizens of different states, since the reason applies to suitors of every country, and foreigners will be more apt than our own citizens to abuse, in the way, which, that part of the proffered

plan permits, and which this amendment of Massachusetts is designed to prevent? England and Scotland are united for every good purpose of defence and offence, yet a foreigner cannot sue a resident Scotsman in England for debt contracted in Scotland: nor will any foreign nation upon earth grant a similar privilege to our citizens over theirs, of calling their people from their own countries to answer demands against them—the fixt idea of all the European nations being, that strangers are not to have privileges in their own country superior to what their own subjects enjoy.*

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

CHANTILLY, May 7th, 1788.

DEAR SIR—Your son delivered me the letter that you were pleased to write me on the 30th instant, and I have promoted his views, as far as it is in my power at present, by directing the tobacco I had intended to sell in the country, to be put on board his vessel. I am inclined to think, for the reasons assigned by him, that the French market will be as good a one, at least, as any that we can send to. Give me leave now, dear sir, to make a few observations on the important business that will call you to Richmond next month. It seems pretty clear at present, that four other states, viz. North Carolina, New-York, Rhode Island, and New-Hampshire, will depend much upon Virginia for their determination on the convention project of a new constitution; therefore it becomes us to be very circumspect and careful about the conduct we pursue, as, on the one hand, every possible exertion of wisdom and firmness should be employed to prevent danger to civil liberty, so, on the other hand, the most watchful precaution should take place to prevent the foes of union, order, and good government, from succeeding so far as to prevent our acceptance of the good part of the plan proposed. I submit to you, sir, whether, to form a consistent union of conduct, it would not be well for six or eight leading friends to amendments to meet privately, and, having formed the best possible judgment of the members' sentiments from knowledge of the men, to see how far it may be safe to press either for modes of amendment or the extent of amendments, and to govern accordingly. But, certainly, the firmest stand should be made against the very arbitrary

* The person to whom the foregoing letter is addressed, is not mentioned.

mode that has been pursued in some states, that is, to propose a question of absolute rejection or implicit admission. For though it is true that the convention plan looks something like this, yet I think every temperate man must agree that neither the convention, nor any set of men upon earth, have or had a right to insist upon such a question of extremity. To receive the good and reject the bad is too necessary and inherent a right to be parted with. As some subtle managers will be upon the convention, I believe you will find entrapping questions proposed at first as a ground-work of proceeding, which will hamper, confine, and narrow all attempts to proper investigation or necessary amendment, and this will be done under the plausible pretext of losing all by attempting *any* change. I judge that it will be so here, because I observe a similar conduct has been pursued in other places, as in Maryland and Pennsylvania. I trust that such uncandid and dangerous stratagems will be opposed and prevented in the convention of Virginia, and a thorough, particular, and careful examination be first made into all its parts as a previous requisite to the formation of any question upon it. During this process a tolerable judgment may be formed of the sentiments of the generality, and a clue furnished for forming successful propositions for amendment, as the candid friends to this system admit that amendments may be made to improve the plan, but say that these amendments ought to be made, and may be obtained from the new Congress without endangering a total loss of the proposed constitution. I say that those who talk thus, if they are sincere, will not object to this plan, which, as I propose it, something like the proceeding of the convention parliament in 1688, in the form of ratification, insert plainly and strongly such amendments as can be agreed upon, and say, that the people of Virginia do claim, demand, and insist upon these as their undoubted rights and liberties which they mean not to part with; and if these are not obtained and secured by the mode pointed out in the fifth article of the convention plan, in two years after the meeting of the new Congress, that Virginia shall, in that case, be considered as disengaged from this ratification. Under this proposition a development will be made of the sincerity of those who advocate the new plan, the beneficial parts of it retained, and a just security given to civil liberty. In the fifth article it is stated that two-thirds of Congress may propose amendments, which, being approved by three-fourths of the legislatures, become parts of the constitution. By this mode, the new Congress may obtain our amendments without risking the convulsion of conventions, and the friends

of the plan will be gratified in what they say is necessary; the putting the government in motion, when, as they again say, amendments may and ought to be obtained. By this mode, too, in all probability, the undetermined states may be brought to harmonize, and the formidable minorities, in the assenting states, may be quieted. By this friendly and reasonable accommodation, the perpetual distrust and opposition, that will inevitably follow the total adoption of the plan, from the state legislatures, may be happily prevented, and friendly united exertions take place. Much reflection has convinced me that this mode is the best that I have had an opportunity of contemplating. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of recommending it to your serious and patriotic attention; in the formation of these amendments, *localities* ought to be avoided as much as possible. The danger of monopolized trade may be prevented by calling for the consent of three-fourths of the United States on regulations of trade. The trial by jury, in this state, to be insisted on, as it used under our present government, and confining the supreme federal court to the jurisdiction of *law* excluding *fact*. The Massachusetts amendments, except the second, and extending the seventh to foreigners as well as citizens of other states, appear to me to be very good, and for their adoption the aid of that powerful state may be secured. The freedom of the press is, by no means, sufficiently attended to by Massachusetts, nor have they remedied the want of responsibility by the impolitic combination of president and senate. It does appear to me, that, in the present temper of America, if the Massachusetts amendments, with those suggested by me, being added, and inserted in our ratification as before stated, we may easily agree, and I verily believe that the most essential good consequences would be the result.

Affectionately yours,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

GEORGE MASON, Esq. Gunston Hall.

CHANTILLY, May 22, 1788.

DEAR SIR—The manner in which we have together struggled for the just rights of human nature, with the friendly correspondence that we have maintained, entitles us, I hope, to the most unreserved confidence in each other, upon the subject of human rights, and the liberty of our country. It is probable that yourself no more than I do, propose to be hereafter politically engaged; neither therefore expecting to gain,

or fearing to loose, the candid part of mankind, will admit us to be impartial judges, at least of the arduous business that calls you to Richmond, on the second of next month. I do not recollect to have met with a sensible and candid man who has not admitted, that it would be both safer and better if amendments were made to the new constitution, proposed for the government of the United States; but the friends to the idea of amendments divide about the mode of obtaining them, some thinking that a second convention might do the business, whilst others fear that the attempt to remedy by another convention, would risk the whole. I have been informed that you wished amendments, but disliked the plan of another convention; the just weight that you have in the councils of your country, may put it in your power, sir, to save from arbitrary rule a great and free people; I have used the words *arbitrary rule*, because great numbers fear that this will be the case, as it *may* be so under the new proposed system, when they reflect on the unvarying progress of power in the hands of frail man; to accomplish the ends of society by being equal to contingencies infinite, demands the deposit of power great and extensive indeed, in the hands of rulers, so great as to render abuse probable, unless prevented by the most careful precautions; among which, the freedom and frequency of elections, the liberty of the press, and the trial by jury, with the independency of the judges, seem to be so capital and essential, that they ought to be secured by a bill of rights, to regulate the discretion of rulers in a legal way, restraining the progress of ambition and avarice within just bounds. Rulers must act by subordinate agents generally, and however the former may be secure from the pursuits of justice, the latter are forever kept in check by the trial by jury, where that exists in all its rights. This most excellent security against oppression, is a universal, powerful, and equal protection of all. But the benefit to be derived from this system, is most effectually to be obtained from a well informed and enlightened people; here arises the necessity for the freedom of the press, which is the happiest organ of communication ever yet devised, the quickest and surest means, of conveying intelligence to the human mind. I am grieved to be forced to think, after the most mature consideration of the constitution proposed, that it leaves the three essential securities above stated, under the mere pleasure of the new rulers; and why should it do so, sir, since the violation of these cannot be necessary to *good*, but will be always extremely convenient for *bad* government. It is a question deserving intense consideration, whether the

state sovereignties ought not to be supported, perhaps in the way proposed by Massachusetts in their first, third, and fourth, amendments. Force and opinion seem to be the two ways alone, by which men can be governed, the latter appears the most proper, for a free people, but remove that, and obedience, I apprehend, can only be found to result from fear, the offspring of force; if this be so, can opinion exist, without competent knowledge of those who govern, and can that knowledge take place, in a country so extensive as the territory of the United States, which is stated by captain Hutchins at a million of square miles; whilst the empire of Germany, contains but 192,000, and that of France, but 163,000 square miles, the almost infinite variety of climates, soils, productions, manners, customs, and interests, renders this still more difficult, for the universal government of our legislature; but very practicable to confederated states, united for mutual safety and happiness, each contributing to the federal head, such a part of its sovereignty, as would render the government fully adequate to these purposes, and no more. The people would govern themselves more easily, the laws of each state, being adapted to its own genius and circumstances; the liberties of the United States would probably be more secure, than under the proposed plan, which, carefully attended to, will be found capable of annihilating the state sovereignties, by the power given to push the operations of their government, under the general legislative right, of commanding taxes without restraint, and seizing the productive revenues that the states may happily fall upon, for their support, and this right, powerfully supported by the congressional court of justice, and by the sacred tye of oath upon all the state judges, will probably prove so strong as to render resistance vain, and the state governments as feeble and contemptible as was the senatorial authority, under the Roman emperors; the name existed, but the thing was gone. I have observed, sir, that the sensible and candid friends of the proposed plan agree that amendments would be proper, but fear the consequences of another convention. I submit the following as an effectual compromise, between the majorities and formidable minorities, that generally prevail. It seems probable, that the determinations of four states, will be materially influenced by the determination of Virginia, which places a strong obligation on this country, to be unusually cautious and circumspect in her conventional conduct; the mode proposed is something like that pursued by the convention parliament of England in 1688. In the act of ratification, insert plainly and strongly, such amendments as can be agreed

upon, and say, that the people of Virginia do insist upon, and mean to retain them as their undoubted rights and liberties, which they intended not to part with, and if these are not obtained and secured by the mode pointed out by the fifth artice of the convention plan, in two years after the meeting of the new congress, that Virginia shall be considered as disengaged from this ratification; in the fifth article it is stated, that two thirds of Congress may propose amendments, which being approved by three fourths of the legislatures, become parts of the constitution; so that the new Congress may obtain the amendment of Virginia, without risking the convulsion of a convention. Thus the beneficial parts of the new system may be retained, and a just security be given for civil liberty, whilst the friends of the system will be gratified, in what they say is necessary, to wit, the putting the government in motion, when, as they again say, amendments may, and ought to be made. The good consequences resulting from this method, will probably be, that the undetermined states may be brought to harmonize, and the formidable minorities in many assenting states, be quieted by so friendly and reasonable an accommodation; and thus the perpetual opposition that will inevitably follow, (the total adoption of the plan) from the state legislatures, may be happily prevented, and united exertions take place. In the formation of these amendments, localities ought to be avoided as much as possible. The danger of monopolized trade may be removed, by calling for the consent of three fourths of the United States, on regulations of commerce. The trial by Jury to be according to the course of proceeding in the state, where the cause criminal or civil is tried, and confining the supreme federal court to the jurisdiction of law, excluding fact. To prevent surprises, and the fixing of injurious laws, it would seem to be prudent to declare against the making laws perpetual, until the experience of two years at least, had vouched their utility; it being much more easy to get a good law continued, than a bad one repealed. The amendments of Massachusetts, appear to be good so far as they go, except the second, and extending the seventh to foreigners, as well as the citizens of other states in this union; and for their adoption, the aid of that powerful state may be secured. The freedom of the press, is by no means sufficiently attended to by Massachusetts, nor have they remedied the want of responsibility, by the impolitic combination of president and senate. It does appear to me, that in the present temper of America, if the Massachusetts amendments with those herein suggested being added, and inserted

in the form of our ratification as before stated, that Virginia may safely agree, and *I believe* that the most salutary consequences would ensue. I pray, sir, that God may bless the convention with wisdom, maturity of counsel, and constant care of the public liberty, and that he may have you in his holy keeping. With very great esteem and regard I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. Mr. Chancellor Pendleton.

CHANTILLY, October 15th, 1788.

Sir—My sentiments of the new constitution, in its present form, having been already communicated to the public, it is not necessary here to repeat my objections; nor will it be wondered, that, with such sentiments, I should declare my willingness to serve in the senate of the new Congress, where, in my judgment, the best opportunity will be afforded of doing the most essential services to the community, and especially at its first institution, when amendments so necessary for the security of civil liberty, will probably be the most attainable. I do assure you, sir, that nothing but the reverence I have for the liberties of my country, and a thorough conviction of the danger these will be exposed to by the unamended state of the new constitution, could have induced me to consent again to become a public man; but where the peace, happiness, and freedom of my country seems concerned, all private considerations will, I hope, with me, forever give place. It is impossible that amendments can fail to be recommended by the new Congress, if the legislatures shall send to that body such men as are known friends to civil liberty, and to the amendments that have been proposed by many respectable states, and are desired by such numbers of respectable citizens; but, to be sure, if characters shall be appointed to the new government, who are so zealously attached to it as to be incapable of seeing faults in it, the friends of just government may be disappointed in their views of amendments, however ardently, and generally, it may be desired. I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Hon. John Jones, in Richmond.

CHANTILLY, October 15th, 1788.

DEAR SIR—Long acquaintance and friendship, with very similar political opinions, will apologize for my troubling you with my wishes that amendments may be procured to the new constitution, by means of the new Congress; and that I am willing to exert my faculties for the obtaining such amendments in the senate of the new legislature, if it shall please the Assembly to send me there; and this information to my friends is the more necessary, because I know it is a common art, in these times, to prevent elections by asserting that persons proposed will not serve, if elected. That amendments are necessary to this system, cannot, I think, be doubted by any sensible and dispassionate man. The thing itself, the judgment of many respectable states, and great numbers of individuals, all proclaim it. Nor will amendments, probably, fail to be made, unless the legislatures should choose men so zealously and blindly devoted as to prevent them from seeing defects that all other men do see. As the subject has been very fully considered, and a majority have received it, professedly under the idea of expected amendments, I should think that, as good citizens, it now becomes us to exert our faculties so to conduct the business as that a wise, energetic, and free government, may result from properly amending the present form. Should this fortunately be your opinion, the community will have the aid of your knowledge and experience in the new legislature.

I have the honour to be, with the truest esteem and regard, dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend and obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

THEODORICK BLAND, Esquire.

NEW YORK, May 28th, 1789.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of March the 23d, was yesterday delivered to me, about eight weeks from its date. The public good, and your recommendation, are motives so powerful with me, that General Martin will be sure of my friendship whenever the time shall come that I can serve him. How the business of appointment to the office he wishes, or any other, will go on, it is not easy to say, because nothing of that kind has yet come upon the tapis. If the constitutional *nomination* takes place, I am inclined to think, that the approbation of the Senate will not be withheld, unless some

palpable impropriety should mark the nomination, which is hardly to be supposed. If, however, it should so turn out as to be in my power to serve General Martin, I shall assuredly do it. I have seen very few of the scurrilous papers that you allude to, but from those I have seen, it is my opinion that neither you nor I may be much disturbed at their effects, since it is not possible that they can have influence with any whose good opinion is worth having. Of all the anonymous nonsense and adulation that I have met with, Decius is the most contemptible; his effusions, nevertheless, are pretty similar to the genius and spirit that has animated the rest of his party. Nothing more than report of the Spanish proceedings have reached me; the public consideration here has never been yet turned upon any thing of that kind. The state of Georgia did, last July, make an offer to the then Congress, of ceding part of her western territory to the United States; but the terms of cession were then clogged with so many oppressive conditions, that the cession was not accepted. I do not know that the state has since receded from the terms it then proposed; whenever any thing relative to that business, shall come on the carpet, I will inform you. An act has passed the Congress for administering the constitutional oath, and an impost bill is now before the Senate, from the House of Representatives; the duties are thought too high, and we are proposing a reduction. A long regulating bill, for securing the collection, is now in the House of Representatives; and in the Senate, a plan is forming for establishing the judiciary system. So far as this has gone, I am satisfied to see a spirit prevailing that promises to send this system out free from those vexations and abuses that might have been warranted by the terms of the constitution. It must never be forgotten, however, that the liberties of the people are not so safe under the *gracious manner* of government, as by the limitation of *power*. Mr. Madison has given notice, that, on Monday se'nnight, he will call for the attention of the house to the subject of amendments. I apprehend, that his ideas, and those of our convention, on this subject, are not similar. We shall carefully attend to this; and when the plan comes to the senate, we shall prepare to abridge, or enlarge, so as to effect, if possible, the wishes of our legislature. I think, from what I hear and see, that many of our amendments will not succeed, but my hopes are strong, that such as may effectually secure civil liberty will not be refused. As two thirds of the legislatures have refused to apply for a general convention, the Congress, it seems, can constitutionally, only submit their propositions

of amendments to the legislatures, or to state conventions; but, I suppose, neitheir of these modes will fail, where the design is more effectually to secure civil liberty; the wish to do which, was, I assure you, the sole reason that could have influenced me to come here, for I agree perfectly with you, that your time of life and mine, after the turbulence we have passed through, renders repose necessary to our declining years. From what you write of the lands on the western frontier of Georgia, I suppose that you have views of family settlement there; as, in that case, the Spaniards will be neighbours, I submit to your consideration, to reflect on the national character of that people, which seems to be firm and immovable in friendship, but very inverate in enmity; peaceable and honest in their dealings, but zealous to an extreme, of attempts upon their territory, especially that from whence they derive their wealth. Will it not be prudent, for such as are their neighbours, to cultivate their friendship, rather than provoke their enmity? It appears to me, that a judicious procedure of this kind, may get every thing from their good will, whilst it will not be pleasant to be in enmity with them; more especially, as there is little doubt, but that, in case of quarrel with us, France will, upon principles of the Bourbon alliance, inevitably join them. The English court have, for some time past, been assiduously courting the court of Spain to a commercial treaty, and, I fear, that our conduct has favoured their views; such a treaty would hurt us, in the same proportion that it will benefit our former enemies. The eyes of Europe are now turned, upon the meeting of the states general in France. If that people succeed in restoring their ancient liberty, France will be the most potent empire in Europe. The war in the north of that part of the world, seems likely to continue, unless the peculiar state of England and of France, should be the means of restoring peace. My brother Arthur, desires his compliments to you; he has read your debates in convention, and accords with you in opinion, about the probable issue of the present system.

I am, with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, your affectionate friend and servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Patrick Henry, Esquire.

NEW YORK, September 14, 1789.

DEAR SIR—I have written two letters to you since my receipt of yours dated March 23d, both which I enclosed to our friend Mr. George Fleming, at Richmond, and he has informed me of their safe arrival, and that he had forwarded them to you. I have since waited to see the issue of the proposed amendments to the constitution, that I might give you the most exact accounts of that business, as they came from the House of Representatives: they were far short of the wishes of our convention, but as they are returned by the Senate they are certainly much weakened. You may be assured that nothing on my part was left undone to prevent this, and every possible effort was used to give success to all the amendments proposed by our country. We might as well have attempted to move mount Atlas upon our shoulders. In fact, the idea of subsequent amendments, was little better than putting oneself to death first, in expectation that the doctor, who wished our destruction, would afterwards restore us to life. I am grieved to see too many look at the rights of the people, as a miser examines a security to find a flaw in it. The great points of free election, jury trial in criminal cases, and the unlimited right of taxation, and standing armies remain as they were. The most essential danger from the present system arises, in my opinion, from its tendency to a consolidated government, instead of a union of confederated states. The history of the world and reason concur in proving, that so extensive a territory as the United States comprehend, never was, or can be governed in freedom under the former idea; under the latter it is abundantly more practicable, because extended representation, knowledge of characters, and confidence in consequence, secures that good opinion of rulers, without which, fear, the offspring of force, can alone answer, for all free government resting on opinion, if that fails, force must succeed; hence standing armies and despotism follow. I take this reasoning to be unrefutable, and therefore it becomes the friends of liberty to guard with perfect vigilance every right that belongs to the states, and to protest against every invasion of them, taking care always to procure as many protesting states as possible; this kind of vigilance will create caution and establish such a mode of conduct as will create a system of precedent that will prevent a consolidating effect from taking place by slow but sure degrees. A sufficient number of legislatures cannot be got at present to agree in demanding a convention, but I shall be very much mistaken indeed, if, ere long, a great sufficiency will not

concur in this measure. The preamble to the amendments is really curious. A careless reader would be apt to suppose that the amendments desired by the states had been graciously granted, but when the thing done is compared with that desired, nothing can be more unlike. Some valuable rights are indeed declared, but the power to violate them to all intents and purposes remains unchanged. The southern Indians having repeatedly declared the little confidence they had in the justice of the bordering states, it was thought that sending commissioners from hence to treat with them, who were totally unconnected with the parties and their disputes, would be the most likely way to gain the Indian confidence, and thereby obtain a secure and lasting peace. Upon this idea three gentlemen have been sent from hence to treat with the Creeks, where probably some measure may be taken with the Cherokees also. In this mode of doing business there was no opportunity for suggesting General Martin; and those gentlemen who have gone, are only appointed *pro hac vice*, and return here when they have done the business. It is probable that this treaty will end in a large cession of territory to Georgia, which may cause a cession of some part to the United States; in either case, those who choose may have an opportunity of obtaining grants in that country, said to be a very fine one. As the laws that have passed Congress this session will all be sent to Richmond, where I am happy to hear you will be in the Assembly, it is unnecessary for me to say any thing of them in this letter, already I fear too long. It is now proposed to adjourn on the 22d inst. but I think it will be the first of October, before this result takes place. I am sure that nothing I write politically to you, will be improperly communicated.

I am, with the most cordial esteem and regard, dear Sir, your most obedient and very humble servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

P. Henry, Esq. Virginia.

NEW YORK, Sept. 28, 1789.

Sir—We have now the honour of enclosing the proposition of amendments to the constitution of the United States, that has been finally agreed upon by Congress. We can assure you sir, that nothing on our part has been omitted to procure the adoption of those radical amendments proposed by the convention, and approved by the legislatures of our country, which as our constituent we shall always consider it our

duty with respect and reverence to obey. The journal of the Senate herewith transmitted, will at once show how exact and how unfortunate we have been in this business. It is impossible for us not to see the necessary tendency to consolidate empire in the natural operation of the constitution if no further amended than as we proposed; and it is equally impossible for us not to be apprehensive for civil liberty, when we know of no instance in the records of history, that shows a people ruled in freedom, when subject to one undivided government, and inhabiting territory so extensive as that of the United States, and when, as it seems to us, the nature of man and of things prevent it. The impracticability in such case, of carrying representation sufficiently near to the people for procuring their confidence and consequent obedience, compels a resort to fear resulting from great force, and excessive power in government. Confederated republics, where the federal hand is not possessed of absorbing power, may admit the existence of freedom, whilst it preserves union, strength, and safety. Such amendments therefore, as may secure against the annihilation of the state governments, we devoutly wish to see adopted. If a persevering application to Congress, from the states that have desired such amendments should fail of its objects, we are disposed to think, reasoning from causes to effects, that unless a dangerous apathy should invade the public mind, it will not be many years before the constitutional number of legislatures will be found to demand a convention for the purpose. We have sent a complete set of the journals of each house of Congress, and through the appointed channel will be transmitted the acts that have passed this session. In these will be seen the nature and extent of the judiciary, the estimated expense of the government, and the means, so far adopted, for defraying the latter. We beg sir, to be presented, with all duty, to the honourable house of representatives, and to assure you, that we are, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, Sir, your most obedient and very humble servants,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.
WILLIAM GRAYSON.

Honourable Speaker of the House of Delegates, Virginia.

NEW YORK, June 10th, 1790.

DEAR SIR—My ill state of health, the inclemency of the season appointed for the meeting of Congress, which in this

place, is most severely felt by all, and absolutely destructive to valetudinary people, prevented me from reaching Congress, before the 20th of April. Previous to my coming, the cession of North Carolina, had been received, and legalized by both houses; and a temporary government, there, similar to that west of Ohio, established. This system included the appointment of a governor, of that district, who by the same system, is also Indian agent, and authorized to transact all affairs with the Indians, in a more extensive and absolute manner, than such agents have been heretofore authorized to do. This then being an office of great consideration and importance, you may easily see, that it would be earnestly sought after, and attainable only by great interest, and particularly such, as was supported by persons in office, here from that state, which had made the cession, as well as by those from Georgia, who were hostile to General M——n. On my arrival here, and finding your two letters, that had been here some time before, I immediately caused Governor Martins to be P——d; the event has been, as apprehended, that your friend would fail, for Mr. William Blunt, of North Carolina, (heretofore in Congress, from that state,) has been appointed governor of the ceded territory, and, as I have observed above, that appointment includes the Indian agency, thus this business has terminated. I should have given you this information sooner, but quickly after my arrival here, I was, with many others, taken extremely ill, so that my life was long in danger, and I was confined for near a month; the effects of this malady, are still upon me, and my weakness so considerable, as to render writing painful to me. With my letters, I found one from you, to Colonel Grayson, which I secured, and now return to you, presuming, that you designed it only for the inspection of the friend, to whom it was addressed. It is impossible, for me to describe the scene here, and shall content myself with saying, that every thing met with in my former life, is mere trifling, compared with this, and you know, that I have been in very stormy legislative scenes. The active and persevering efforts of those who have engrossed the public securities, for little or nothing, not content with that advantage, must have six per cent. forever, on the full nominal value of their possessions; so that a vast monied interest is to be created, that will forever be warring against the landed interest, to the destruction of the latter; and this evil, great as it would be, by funding the debts of the United States only, is to be increased ten fold, by the assumption of the state debts. By this plan, the monied and the political speculator, will both be gratified; the

former, by the way I have already stated, and the latter, by possessing the general government, with the sole cause, and consequently, with the whole power of taxation, and so converting the state legislatures into mere corporations. That this will be the consequence of funding the continental and state debts, amounting to about eighty millions of specie dollars, there can be no difficulty in foreseeing. There appears to be no prospect of further amendments to the constitution, this session, and I own, 'tis my wish, that the amendments generally, as proposed at the last session, had been adopted by our legislature; for although there is much force in your observations, upon that subject, yet when I consider one great object of declarations, beyond which government may not go, to wit: that they inculcate upon the minds of the people, just ideas of their rights, it will always be hazardous for rulers, however possessed of means, to undertake a violation of what is generally known to be right, and to be encroachments on the rights of the community; besides, that by getting as much as we can at different times, we may at last come to obtain the greatest part of our wishes. It would probably contribute much to this end, if at the ensuing election of representatives, instructions were given by the people of those districts, that send influential members here, to exert themselves to procure such additional amendments as have not yet been made. Such bad use has so often been made of my letters, that I am sure, the bare hint of this, is sufficient to secure your remembrance, that when I write to you, 'tis always in confidence. I shall be at all times happy to hear from you, being very sincerely, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and ob't serv't.

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

PATRICK HENRY, Esq., Virginia.

HEAD QUARTERS, the 28th October, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Receive my very sincere thanks for the advice you favoured me with. I am yet more sensible of such a service, when I consider my friends must be in the same want of news, as I am myself, without being happier perhaps in their expectations; however, I'll write by every good opportunity—some letters will escape, and let them know that I am alive. I am not in any doubt, that the English will kill me in Europe, when they expect to take me in America, according to their New York papers. I take therefore the liberty, of enclosing you a letter for a friend of mine, where I give to him some accounts in general; none of my acquaintances shall receive a word from me, without political and American reflections. I know well the ..... genius of our enemies, that I'll endeavour all my powers, to let the truth ..... in Europe, of their ridiculous relations. For a long time, nobody would think himself a true friend of mine, without being what they call, a *good insurgent*. I dare hope, that I can raise in my own country, as strong a party as can be there, of the most agreeable and polite. Though I wrote several letters upon the same principles, I send you but one; the others will be carried by Mr. de Valfont, actually at, or very near York, whom I will introduce to my friends in France. I beg from you .... the occasion of this gentleman the greatest pleasure and most interesting service; he is my intimate friend, and I wish warmly to obtain the following favour.—He came over on board of my vessel by a sincere attachment for me, and with the hope of being always in my family; if he could stay, I would now trouble Congress, in order to get employment for him, but the deplorable state of his health obliges him to return home. He has not a moment to lose—his life depends on his safe and speedy arrival in France. I understand that Congress would engage the captain of their packet, to take him on board, alone, or if possible, with one of his friends; it is much better, than exposing him to the dangers of a merchant vessel. Will you be so good, sir, to inquire yourself, where my friend can be; Mr. Lawrens, who will receive a letter from his son. is able, I believe, to give you that intelligence; then you'll engage Mr. de Valfont, to take that opportunity, and the captain, to embark him in his vessel, at whatever price he will choose. Perhaps 'tis not ..... to

our business, that my letters could arrive soon. I know by my experience, that a great authenticity is desired in the American views; however, I give you one, which in all cases, will acquaint my societies in Paris, of John Burgoyne being prisoner of war. Farewell, sir, I will not detain your despatches, therefore it shall not give me the pleasure of presenting you in long terms, with the assurances of my affection and esteem, with which I am, yours,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

I add here, sir, the letters of several gentlemen, and one from myself to the French ambassador, which you can read, and seal after if you please. A meeting of general officers yesterday, prevented me of sending my despatches. I enclose too, a letter from his excellency, General Washington, for you. Sir, be pleased to let Mr. Carrol get the other one.

VALLEY FORGE CAMP, the 29th of May, 1778.

DEAR SIR—Agreeable to your kind proposition, of sending with packets of Congress, those I should give to you, I have the honour to send a large parcel of letters, which I beg you would forward. The president of Congress, has, I believe, some letters from me, to my friends in France, which you will be pleased to ask from him, and I don't know but that Mr. de Francy might have some; the whole is to go (if you please) in your packet. I hope the bearer of this, will arrive in time, but if he be too late, I will take it as a favour of you, to send an express to the place where your vessel lies, *not at public*, but at my expense. I understand there are vessels going with despatches of Congress, every tenth day, to France; if so, I would be extremely obliged to you to let me know immediately, when my packets are to be sent, because I would make new ones, without loss of time. The only way to be certain, that my friends will hear from me, is to divide my letters by several occasions. Since the last miscarriage and little walk around the country of Sir Henry Clinton, we have no interesting news. It is with the greatest gratefulness, that I have heard, in the full persuasion of possessing me and the whole detachment, they had already very kindly disposed of me, and intended to send me immediately to their gracious sovereign;—is it not very impolite to acknowledge such a favour, by procuring them a fatiguing and useless route of more than forty miles. I

will not detain longer the officer, bearer of these despatches, and I will end this letter, with the assurances of a sentiment of mine, which is, I do assure you, very sincere, it is the regard and affection, with which I have the honour to be, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Yorktown.

VALLEY FORGE CAMP, 8th of June, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I will trouble you with these few lines, in behalf of a gentleman, who is now in Yorktown, and wants to get a certificate of his services from Congress; this is General Conway, who has written to me several letters on the subject. My being the warmest friend and the first admirer of our great general, will not prevent me to speak in favour of a gentleman, whose conduct I was very far from approving on that and on other respects; but General Conway, is an officer in the French service, and a good one; he is much known by a man for whom I have a great regard, and it engages me to make you this request, though I just now received a letter of his, of which I could be very little satisfied; therefore, when his affair be spoken of in Congress, be so good as to mention, that I will be very glad if a certificate is given to him, of what they believe he deserves by his services. I beg you would show this letter to the president of Congress, and believe me, with the most sincere regard, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

HON. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

CAMP AT BRUNSWICK, 2d July 1778.

DEAR SIR—I beg leave to tell you some words of congratulation, for the advantage obtained by General Washington and your troops, over the forces of the English army. I think their journey through the Jerseys has been rather disagreeable, and bought very dear. This occasion, I fancy will be a reason for sending some packet boat to France; I beg you would give me notice of it, in time, that my friends may not be deceived by some . . . . . account, as they were at Brandywine. Don't you find, my dear sir, very extraordinary, to be in such an ignorance, of what is

doing in camp? may I hope you will be so good, as to let me know which were the last accounts—which was the last date arrived to your knowledge. I will take the liberty of recommending once more to your friendship, the affair of Colonel Armaud, which I wish to be soon settled, agreeable to his desire. There is one other thing I want to consult you upon: you have seen my public letter concerning the M. de Rienne, and therefore you are acquainted well enough of what concerns that gentleman. He has always been near the enemy, and risked to be taken without commission; the consequences thereof could be avoided, was Congress kind enough to make him a compliment of the commission he is now entitled to receive in France—this of Colonel, that is an idea which I wanted to communicate to you. You will hear soon of a very disagreeable affair, concerning . . . . . upon which I need not to be particular, but am very sorry any event of that kind might have taken place. With the highest regard and sincere affection, I have the honour to be,

Dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

BRUNSWICK CAMP, 6th July, 1778.

Dear Sir—I beg leave to introduce to you Monsieur Tourad, an officer, whose merit you will easily know in being better acquainted with him. I have written several times to Congress in his behalf, and a new letter of mine is just now sent to the president, which points out some particular circumstances, where he did more expressly deserve the attention of Congress. I will take, my dear sir, as a very particular favour from your friendship, to advise and countenance him in any thing which will lay in your power, as a gentleman I have a true affection for. With the most sincere affection and regard, I have the honour to be,

Dear sir, your most obedient servant,

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

P. S. When do you send a packet boat to France.

BRUNSWICK CAMP, 6th July, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I beg leave to introduce and particularly recommend to you, Monsieur de Rienne, lately arrived from France, who did not think of leaving camp, while there was something to be done in it, and who is now going to wait on Congress. Any thing you could wish to know of that gentleman's distinguished family, and long services, you have already seen by a public letter of mine to Congress. I am now writing another, and I leave to Monsieur de Rienne the care of taking it himself, which plan would suit him better. You may rest assured that a corps of horse would prove very useful in his hands. You will be pleased to remember the hint I gave you in my last letter, about a commission to be given to him. With the highest regard and sincere friendship, I have the honour to be, dear sir,

Your affectionate

The Marquis De LA FAYETTE.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Member of Congress, at Philadelphia.

ON BOARD OF THE ALLIANCE, 7th January, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Since I had the pleasure of hearing from you, I am told you are gone to Virginia, but I guess you must be back by this time; so at least I wish, because I have desired Monsieur de la ..... and ..... to take your commands, and I flatter myself, you will favour me with a letter by each of these gentlemen. You know Congress have resolved to send fast sailing vessels this month, and the marine committee have been pleased to permit my appointing some officers to carry the despatches: it is so sure an occasion that I hope you will write me about any public or private affairs, which you choose to entrust to me. After having waited a very long time for an answer I expected from Congress, I think it now my duty not to detain any longer the former despatches. My reasons for having acted and now acting as I do, are explained in longer terms to Congress, and I hope they will meet with your approbation. I always recommend you ideas, which you and myself are fond of, about a Canadian expedition; I really think it of high importance to America, and would be very sorry was such an enterprise thought impossible. I hope you will not be obliged to recall the proposed plan, and that means may

be found of executing it. Farewell, my dear sir, and believe me, with the most perfect regard,

Your most obedient humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee.

HAVRE, 7th October, 1779.

Dear Sir—I am to acknowledge the receipt of a precious favour from you, which, in all times, would have been very dear to me, but was the more welcome, that very few American letters are arrived into my hands. From your worthy brother, from Mr. Franklin's despatches, from my own letters to Congress, you might receive any European intelligence that is worth mentioning. I will then, my dear sir, employ the little time that is given to me for my letter, in assuring you again of the sense I have of your friendship for me, which I deserve by the most sincere attachment. Be pleased, my dear sir, to make my compliments acceptable to your brother, Mr. Samuel and John Adams, Dr.
all my friends in Congress, and the city, whom you very well know.

I am sorry that circumstances, in which I hope you will approve of my conduct, have prevented me from being a witness of such successes as Count . . . . . arrival has certainly brought on. *I wish you might be in Congress* on the reading of my public letter. I give a little hint of the warm desire I have of coming again on the American shores. But whatever may be Count . . . . . operation, it will perhaps bring on again some ideas, which should more properly be called *yours*, but which I dare call . . . . by the great delight I had taken in them. In all cases, if something is done in America, I will be very happy to hear. My private circumstances, in this part of the world, are as agreeable as the most wishing heart may any way desire; but I will be very happy in sailing again for America, and with pleasure could bring on such an event.

With the most sincere affection, I have the honour to be, dear sir, yours,

LA FAYETTE.

The honourable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Congress.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 17th, 1780.

DEAR SIR—Though I am to complain of your silence, I take this opportunity of remembering myself to your friendship, and beg leave of introducing to you Monsieur de Laval and Count de Custine, both of whom command a regiment in the French army at Rhode Island. These gentlemen intend travelling to the southward, and I think we must do every thing in our power for the officers of these auxiliary troops, such of them particularly as hold a high rank at their court. Pursuant to this duty I gave them letters of recommendation for you, and assure you, my dear friend, that, with the highest regard, and sincere affection, I shall ever be your most obedient, humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

PARIS, March the 16th, 1785.

MY DEAR SIR—What intelligence I may think worth while for the President of Congress to read, I have communicated to the secretary for foreign affairs, to whom I beg leave to refer your excellency; but the personal tribute of my regard and affection, I can only trust to persons, whose sentiments, my good friend, have been long engraved in my heart. To you I owe my first obligations—and to be obliged to you, has been long to me a more pleasing idea. Highly sensible of your friendship, and its value, I am happy in every opportunity to remind you of me; and I know you will be pleased to hear that I am well, and happy with my family and friends. The situation of affairs in Europe made it highly proper for me to arrive at the time I did; but matters are now taking a pacific turn, and, since my return, has ceased to present itself under the idea of necessity. I more than ever lament the shortness of a visit, which I fondly hope to renew in a little time. What has been given to foreign trade in the West Indies, although it is short of what had been demanded, becomes a source of complaint among the merchants of this country, but who might be more tractable, had they a larger share in the American trade. The spirit of Great Britain seems to me, not hostile as some pretend, but averse to the United States, which, by the way, is a very foolish policy. I am glad to hear you are seriously taking up a plan for the navigation of your rivers in Virginia. You will find the Spaniards very obstinate; but every means

must be taken to reason them into proper measures. Above all, my dear sir, do attend to the confederation, to union and harmony, to every regulation that can give security to the commerce, energy to the government, and faith to the public creditors. This Congress is an excellent one, and the fate of future ages does principally depend upon what will be done this year. Impossible would it be for me to express the pleasure I feel, when I hear something that redounds to the glory of America! Adieu, my dear sir; remember me most affectionately to all your family, and Ludwell in particular. My best compliments also wait upon Mr. Arthur Lee. Should you write to the . . . . . send my love to him. God bless you, my good friend. With every sentiment of affection and respect,

I have the honour to be, your obedient humble servant,

LA FAYETTE.

My compliments wait upon your colleagues in the delegation. I hope . . . . . is married by this time.

NEW HAMPSHIRE CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, 23d August, 1779.

MY DEAR SIR—It gives me pleasure to find, by your favour of the 8th instant, that you have got the better of your indisposition, and I hope shortly to have the additional satisfaction of being informed that your health is perfectly restored.

The Confederacy is still waiting for her freight; I fancy a late arrival at Boston will hasten her departure. A long political letter has been received from Mr. Adams, in which he gives a high character of his companion in France. I hope this gentleman will receive such impressions in the country where he first landed, as will sufficiently guard him against the pernicious air of Philadelphia. From the character given of him, there is no room to apprehend much danger of his being drawn into party, by the insidious arts of base, designing men, but still it may not be amiss to fortify him against any such attempts. The arrival of Mr. Adams may make a change in some political plans; I wish he would come this way, but I do not understand he has any such intention. The reading of Doctor Lee's vindication, &c. afforded me high entertainment; envy, malice, and every vindictive passion that disappointed malevolence could inspire, appeared on various countenances around the room. Fiddle head shook, swivel eye nestled and turned pale, the chair changed colour at every sentence, some others forced a sneer, endeavouring to conceal their chagrin and confusion; this, you may well suppose, afforded me no small degree of enjoyment. The Base-Viol has tarried a fortnight beyond the time he some time ago set for his departure; he has met with something of late, that has lowered him exceedingly, but what it is, I know not, perhaps it may be the oath you mention. What can become of Ford; it is now ten days since a fellow passenger of his passed through this city, who informed, that Ford had despatches for Congress, but nothing further has been heard of him. It is hinted, by some, that he will not be permitted to pass this way, but those are not remarkable for their friendship for his late employer. I

shall not be under the least concern for the fishery, if a proper person can be agreed on to negotiate the business; but that still remains a matter of uncertainty. The resignation of Doctor Lee, at this time, would certainly be injurious: though, I hope, when he has completed the business that I now expect he is engaged in, he will ask leave to come to America; but, in my opinion, it will be best not to resign; the thought of his coming to this country, would make some of the villains tremble, but, if he resigns, it will be said he has no intention of coming here, and many injurious stories will be circulated, that may make an impression that may give him, or his friends, some trouble to remove. The few select friends, whom you honoured with your confidence, have considered the subject submitted to them; their opinions will be given you by Mr. L——e, or Mr. L——l, who, no doubt, will write you fully on the subject.

It is uncertain when I shall take my leave of this place, but I believe it will be October first. Whenever that happens, or wherever I may be, to hear of your happiness will always be a great addition to mine.

I am, my dear sir, with the highest esteem, and most sincere affection,

Yours,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Honorable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
At Chantilly, Northern Neck, Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 18, 1779.

My dear Sir—When I did myself the honour of writing to you last, it was my intention to tarry here till the latter end of next month, but the arrival of a second colleague has altered my determination; I shall take my leave of this city to-morrow, but I must confess, I shall not do it with the satisfaction I should, if Virginia, and some other states, that might be mentioned, were represented in the manner I have known them.

It affords me particular satisfaction to find, by your favour of the 4th instant, that your health is restored. I hope your influence will make some beneficial changes in the politics of Virginia. I am sure your endeavours will not be wanting, and I am very sure, you are convinced of the necessity of changing men, if not measures. If there is as much virtue and integrity in a certain Assembly, as formerly, there certainly is a languor, a want of resolution, to oppose vice,

and stem the torrent of corruption, that at this time, threatens ruin to America; but, I hope, that persevering spirit, which heretofore faced every difficulty, and looked all opposition out of countenance, will again revive and scatter the cloud that now hangs over us. I expect my retirement will afford me a satisfaction, impossible to be enjoyed in Philadelphia; but, however happy my situation may be, it will ever be increased by hearing of the prosperity and happiness of those worthy patriots, who first stepped forward, braved every danger, and combated the greatest difficulties, and by their virtuous struggles, and unremitted exertions, have thus far rescued their country from the hand of tyranny. Some of your friends, particularly Mr. Laurens, and Mr. Lovell, will give you an account how matters are going on here; these gentlemen, I need not tell you, are real friends to virtue, and, consequently, to those devoted to the cause of virtue. I much approve Dr. Lee's intention, to come to this country, when the Spanish business is concluded. I think it necessary he should have a fair opportunity, of putting to shame, those base assassins, whose malice is wrought up to the highest pitch, by a consciousness of their own inferiority. If he lands in New Hampshire, I am confident he will be received with the respect due, and in some measure, proportioned to his merit. I shall be particularly happy in having an opportunity, of manifesting my gratitude, for his services to America. Notwithstanding the great distance between us, I shall flatter myself with hopes of sometimes receiving a line from you, and you may be assured, I shall omit no opportunity of communicating whatever I think will give you pleasure. Please to remember me, very affectionately, to Colonel F. Lee.

I am, my dear Sir, with the highest esteem and respect,

Your sincerely affectionate friend,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq. at Chantilly,
Northern Neck, Virginia.

PORTSMOUTH, Sept. 15, 1783.

My dear Friend—I am honoured with your two favours of the 1st and 7th of July, and should long ago have acknowledged the receipt of them, had not my absence, on a long journey, prevented their coming to my hands till very lately. You may be assured, sir, that, as it will always afford me great pleasure to be instrumental in promoting the interest of

any of your family, I shall embrace every opportunity to recommend your son, to such of my acquaintance, as have business to transact in your country. The opinions here, respecting the address of Congress, are various; our Assembly have not yet adopted the measures recommended, but I have some expectation that they will, at their next session, which is in October. The local circumstances of this state, points out the necessity of the measure, and though I always pay the greatest deference to your judgment, I do not see the danger of placing such funds in the hands of Congress, under proper restrictions, for a limited time; on the other hand, is not something of this sort necessary to cement the union, on which the well being of America so much depends? It appears to me, that a great revenue should be raised on foreign trade, and if this tax is not under some general regulation, quarrels will surely arise, which will, at least, endanger, if not totally destroy, the union. However you and I may differ in opinion, as to the means, I am sure we have the same great object in view, the good of our common country. This being the basis on which our friendship is built, I trust it will not easily be shaken; I can, therefore, with the greatest confidence, assure you of the unceasing esteem and respect, of your very affectionate friend, and most obedient servant,

WILLIAM WHIPPLE.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

MASSACHUSETTS CORRESPONDENCE.

BOSTON, May 14, 1768.

SIR—By Mr. Edward Church, a passenger in ———, Wilson, who sailed the 24th ultimo, I sent you the Journals of the House of Representatives for the year past. There cannot be a better evidence of the moderation and good temper, with which the affairs of the last session, for the greater part of it, were conducted, than the governor's speech to the two Houses, when it ended. The House of Representatives were constantly attentive to the late acts of Parliament, and almost their whole time was employed in preparing a petition to his majesty, and letters to his ministers, &c. Nothing extraordinary passed between the governor and the House, who seemed determined to carry on business without giving his excellency the least uneasiness that could possibly be avoided. As an instance, they readily complied with his request for a further establishment for Fort Pownal, at the eastward; which I am satisfied was done rather to gratify the governor at this juncture, than from an apprehension of the real necessity of it. His excellency, in the speech above referred to, complains that the lovers of contention have sought an occasion of reviving it. It is not difficult to find by the journals, what gave occasion of uneasiness in the latter part of the session. Had the governor concealed from the House, the letter he had received from Lord Shelburne, which it does not appear he was under any sort of necessity of disclosing to them, all things would have gone on quietly; but when they found that his lordship had passed a censure upon their conduct, grounded upon information he had received, and probably, as they thought, by his excellency's own letters, it is not to be wondered at, that they judged it necessary to take measures to set their conduct right in the mind of a nobleman of his lordship's dignity, character, and rank in his majesty's service; especially as it appeared by the letter, that his majesty himself had approved of the governor's negativing some of the gentlemen they had elected as counsellors, as being done with due deliberation and judgment. The steps which the House took were no other than

common sense, as I apprehend, would dictate to any private gentleman in a similar case. They are published for the world to judge, if there was any contention in the matter, to whom the blame ought to be imputed. It is observable, that where there is a total want of confidence between the governor and the people, which appears to me to be the case in this province at present, suspicions of each other will often take place, and operate to disturb the public tranquillity, and hinder the affairs of his majesty's government in the province from being carried on so prosperously as all good men would wish for. How far the jealousies of the House, in the present case, of his excellency's having misrepresented them to his majesty, as acting from unworthy views and motives in their elections, is to be justified by his lordship's letter, disinterested persons will judge. Such kind of jealousy has long been in the minds of very many, if not the greater part of the people; and I am persuaded that nothing will remove it from the minds of by far the greater part of those persons who constituted that House, but a sight of his excellency's letters, or a declaration from his lordship, if he will condescend to give it, to the contrary. That House has since been dissolved, according to custom, and a new one will be returned this month; I have no reason to think that a cordiality will ever subsist between the present governor and the representatives of the people. Harmony, upon the principles of liberty and virtue, is much to be desired; but prejudices have taken so deep root, that it is not to be expected, which side soever is in fault. If the prejudice be invincible, his majesty's government must be impeded, and both the governor and the people must be unhappy. I now speak my mind with an unreserved freedom, and I hope with candour and impartiality, and not indecently; for, though I can by no means say that I am captivated with his excellency's administration, I should always rejoice in his prosperity; and were he my patron or father, my regards for his ease and comfort, as well as for the people, would induce me to wish for his removal to another government. The board of commissioners of the custom here is extremely disgustful to the people; they are neglected by men of fortune and character, and are viewed, in general, in no better light than the late commissioners of the stamps; they appear to be a useless and very expensive set of officers, and the arrival of their appendages, from time to time, with large salaries, together with the many officers of inferior class, which they have created since they came here, alarm the people with disagreeable apprehensions. The ideas of their being designed

to facilitate trade, are now altered, and they are considered as the regulators of a revenue raised out of the people without their consent, and therefore unconstitutional and oppressive. Besides, it is apprehended that, in a very little time, they will have an influence that will be justly formidable, by appointing as many officers under them as they please, for whose support it is said they may sink the whole revenue; they may have it in their power to form such a connexion, as to make themselves terrible to the liberties of the people. There is an anxious expectation of the event of the petition and letters sent home. It is hoped by the most thinking and judicious here, that the revenue acts will be repealed, and the commissioners recalled; if this should not take place, it is hard to say what may be the consequence. While America enjoyed her liberties, Great Britain reaped the profits of her trade, and had her warmest affection; but, if her liberties are violated by the mother country, and her trade rescinded, where is the bond of mutual affection! The resolution of the Americans, which had its rise in this town, not to make use of foreign superfluities, I perceive, by the London prints, is disregarded there as a mere puff, because, upon inquiry, it was found that the merchants had not stopped their orders for such kind of articles, and these have the usual exportations to America this spring. But I wish that this matter was considered with a little more attention; for, although it is very probable that many persons may break through their agreement, yet there is no doubt, in my mind, but such numbers will adhere to it, as must affect the British manfacturers. There is certainly such a disposition among the people to furnish themselves with the American manufactures, as never was known before; and there have been late instances of the manufacture of a variety of articles much beyond expectation. It is well known what large quantities of the British manufactures are annually consumed in America. Could Great Britain endure a total stop to this consumption? or what part of it would she be willing should be saved? Will not the making of one piece of woollen cloth encourage the making of another? And if this spirit of manufacturing is excited by resentment, as some of your writers allege, is it natural to suppose it will stop short of the utmost possibility? Can any man in England or America, ascertain the bounds? Will it not affect the mother country in proportion to the extent of it? But there is another consideration of great weight. Let the importations from Britain be ever so large, the trade of America is so embarrassed and burthened, that it will not afford the people the ability of wearing fine clothes, and pay-

ing for them, so that, in the course of things, the importations must cease through necessity. I pray God, that those who conduct the affairs of the nation, may be endowed with true wisdom; that all measures, destructive to the common interest, may be reversed; that fomenters of division, on both sides the Atlantic, may be detected and punished; that Great Britain and the colonies may thoroughly understand their mutual interest and dependence; that harmony may be cultivated between them, and that they may long flourish in one undivided empire.

I am, with great regard, sir, your most humble servant,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

June 6th, 1768.

SIR—The bearer of this letter, Mr. John Jefferies, is a young gentleman of a liberal education, and of a good family here. He is the son of Mr. David Jefferies, a gentleman highly esteemed by good men, whose anxiety for his only son, leads him to seek the occasional advice of men of religion, aged and experienced, in London, where he will be a stranger. To gratify the father's request, I mention him to you in particular. As I am influenced by motives of friendship to one, solicitous for his son's *spiritual*, as well as temporal interest, I hope you will excuse the freedom taken by

Your humble servant,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

DENNYS DE BERDT, Esquire.

BOSTON, March 21, 1775.

SIR—I am much obliged to you for your favour of 4th February last, by Captain Layton. From the beginning of this great contest with the mother country, I have seen Virginia distinguishing herself in the support of American liberty; and in the liberal donations received from all parts of that colony, for the sufferers in this town, we have had abundant testimonies of their unanimity and zeal for that all-important cause. I have the pleasure to assure you, that the people of this colony, (saving a few detestable men, most of whom are in this town,) are also firm and united. General Gage is still here, with eleven regiments, besides several detachments; yet, it is generally supposed, that there are

not more than two thousand five hundred effective men in all. They have been very sickly through the winter past; many have died, and many others have deserted. I have seen a joint list, and I believe it to be a true one, of the royal Irish, and the detachments from the sixty-fifth, in which the whole number was one hundred and sixty-seven, and only one hundred and two of them effective. But though the number of the troops are diminished, the insolence of the officers (at least some of them) is increased. In private rencontres, I have not heard of a single instance of their coming off other than second best. I will give you several instances of their behaviour in public. On the 6th instant, there was an adjournment of one of our town meetings, when an oration was delivered in commemoration of the massacre on the 5th of March, 1770. I had long expected that they would take that occasion to beat up a breeze, and, therefore, (seeing many of the officers present before the orator came in,) as moderator of the meeting, I took care to have them treated with civility, inviting them into convenient seats, &c. that they might have no pretence to behave ill; for it is a good maxim, in politics as well as in war, to put and keep the enemy in the wrong. They behaved tolerably well until the oration was finished, when, upon a motion made for the appointment of another orator, as usual, they began to hiss, which irritated the assembly to the greatest degree, and confusion ensued; they, however, did not gain their end, which was apparently to break up the meeting, for order was soon restored, and we proceeded regularly and finished the business. I am persuaded, that, were it not for the danger of precipitating a crisis, not a man of them would have been spared. It was provoking enough to the whole corps, that while there were so many troops stationed here, with the design of suppressing town meetings, there should yet be one for the purpose of delivering an oration to commemorate a massacre perpetrated by soldiers, and to show the danger of standing armies; they, therefore, it seems, a few days after, vented their passion on a poor, simple countryman, the state of whose case is drawn up by himself, and sworn to before a magistrate, as you will see by the enclosed; thus you see, that the practice of tarring and feathering, which has so often been exclaimed against, by the tories, and even in the British House of Commons, as inhuman and barbarous, has, at length, been revived by some of the polite officers of the British army, stationed in this place, professedly to prevent riots. Some gentlemen of the town, waited on the general on this occasion; he appeared to be angry at it, and declared

that he knew nothing about any such design; he said, that he, indeed, heard an irregular beat of the drum, (for they passed by his house,) but thought they were drumming a bad woman through the streets! This, to be sure, would not have been a riot. The selectmen of Billarica, an inland town, about thirty miles distant, to which the abused man belonged, have since made a remonstrance to the general, a copy of which is enclosed. The general promised them that he would inquire into the matter, but we hear nothing more about it. Some say, that he has lost the command over his officers, and is afraid of displeasing them; how this may be I cannot say.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

PHILADELPHIA, June 26, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR—I intended to have written to you, by the last post, but being under the necessity of despatching some letters to Boston, by the eastern post, which went off the same day, I was prevented. When you left this city, you may remember that the enemy were at Brunswick, and our army at a place called Middlebrook, about nine miles north of Brunswick, since which, General Howe, who had joined his army, marched suddenly from thence, with the design, as it was generally believed, to make a rapid push for Philadelphia, but he disappointed the hopes of some, and the fears of others, by halting at Somerset court house, about nine miles on the road leading to Caryel's ferry. General Sullivan, who, you know, had been at Princeton, made a quick march to cover our boats at the ferry, and, by retarding Howe's march, to give an opportunity to our army to come up and attack them. But the enemy continuing at Somerset, Sullivan advanced with a considerable force, consisting of continental troops and militia, and posted himself at a place called Scarland hills, within six miles of Somerset court house. The enemy were very strongly posted; their right at Brunswick, and their left at Somerset, well fortified on the right, and having the Raritan in front, and Millstone on the left. In this situation Gen. Washington did not think it prudent to attack them, as it did not appear to him to be warranted by a sufficient prospect of success; and, he thought, it might be attended with ruinous consequences: his design then was to reduce the security of his army to the greatest certainty, by collecting all the forces that could be drawn from other quarters, so as to be in a condition of embracing any fair oppor-

tunity that might offer to make an attack on advantageous terms; and, in the mean time, by light bodies of militia, seconded and encouraged by a few continental troops, to harass and diminish their numbers by continual skirmishes; but the enemy made an unexpected retreat to Brunswick, and, afterwards, with great precipitation, to Amboy.

June 29th—On Wednesday last, the enemy, reenforced, as it is said, with marines, marched from Amboy, through a road between Brunswick and Elizabethtown, to a place called Westfield, about ten miles, with a design, as it is supposed, to cut off our light troops, and bring on a general battle, or to take possession of the highland back of Middlebrook, for which last purpose, Westfield was the most convenient route; and it was, also, a well chosen spot from whence to make a safe retreat, in case he should fail of gaining his point. On this march, they fell in with General Maxwell, who thought it prudent to retreat to our main army, then at Quibbletown, from whence General Washington made a hasty march to his former station, and frustrated the supposed design of the enemy. I have given you a very general narrative of the different situations and movements of the two armies, without descending to the particulars, because we have not, as yet, an authentic account, and one cannot depend upon the many stories that are told. I think, I may assure you, that our army is in high spirits, and is daily growing more respectable in point of numbers. We are going on, within doors, with tardiness enough; a thousand little matters too often thurst out greater ones; a kind of fatality still prevents our proceeding a step in the important affairs of confederation. Yesterday, and the day before, was wholly spent in passing resolutions to gratify New York, or, as they say, to prevent a civil war between that state and the green mountain men, a matter which it is not worth your while to have explained to you. Monsieur D'Coudray's affair is still unsettled. The French engineers have arrived; they are said to be very clever, but disdain to be commanded by D'Coudray. The commissioner, D——n, continues to send us French, German, and Prussian officers, with authenticated conventions, and strong recommendations. The military science, for your comfort, will make rapid progress in America; our sons and nephews will be provided for in the army, and a long and moderate war will be their happy portion; but who, my friend, would not wish for peace. May I live to see the public liberty restored, and the safety

of our dear country secured; I should then think I had enjoyed enough, and bid this world adieu.

Yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

PHILADELPHIA, July 22, 1777.

MY DEAR SIR—Your very acceptable letter of the twelfth, came to my hand yesterday; the confederation is most certainly an important object, and ought to be attended to and finished speedily; I moved the other day and urged, that it might then be brought on, but your colleague Colonel H. . . . opposed and prevented it, Virginia not being represented, it is put off till you shall arrive; you see therefore, the necessity of your hastening to Congress.

We have still further and still confused accounts, from the northward,—— letters are rueful indeed, even to a great degree, and with an awkward mixture, that excites one to laugh in the midst of calamity. He seems to contemplate his own happiness in not having had much, or indeed any hand, in the unhappy disaster; he throws blame on Sinclair, in his letter of the ninth of July; "what adds to my distress, says he, is, that a report prevails, that I had given orders for the evacuation of Ticonderoga, whereas not the most distant hint of any such intention, can be drawn from any of my letters to general Sinclair, or any other person whatsoever," he adds, "what could induce the general officer to a step, that has ruined our affairs in this quarter, God only knows." And indeed Sinclair's own letter of the 30th of June, dated at Tyconderoga, would induce one to be of the same opinion; for he there says, "my people are in the *best disposition possible*; and I have no doubt about giving a good account of the enemy, should they think proper to attack us." Other parts of his letter are written in the same spirited stile. The general officers blame New England, for not furnishing their quota of troops. It is natural for parties concerned, to shift the faults from one to the other; and your friend General Steven, who seems desirous of clearing his countrymen from all blame, in a letter to your brother, says, "eight thousand were thought adequate to the purpose; they (new England) furnished about three thousand," and "for want of the quota the place was lost; if the war is protracted by it, *they* stand answerable for the consequences." The General forgets, that five of the ten battalions ordered from Massachusetts to Tyconderoga were countermanded, and are now at Picks Kill. I

will give you an abstract of the forces, at Tyconderoga and Mount Independence, the twenty-fifth of June, taken from muster master, Colonel Varick's return.

Fit for duty of the nine continental regiments commissioned, non-commissioned, and staff officers included,	2738
Colonels Wells' and Leonard's regiments of militia from Massachusetts, (their time expired the sixth of July,)	637
Colonel Lang's regiment of N. H. militia, (engaged, to the first of August,)	199
Major Stevens's corp of artillery,	151
Five companies of artificers,	178
Whatcomb's, Aldrick's and Lee's rangers,	70
Sick in camp, and in barricks,	342
Men at out posts not included,	218
	4533

Besides a number of recruits, belonging to the continental regiments arrived at Tyconderoga, between the eighteenth and twenty-ninth of June, that are not included in the above abstract. General Schuyler, in his letter of the ninth of July, says, "I am informed from *undoubted authority*, that the garrison was reenforced with twelve hundred men, at least two days before the evacuation." When the commander in chief writes in so positive terms, one would presume, upon his certain knowledge of facts; but as he was not present with his army, let us suppose, (though it does not seem probable, by the general gloomy cast of his letter,) that he has overrated the numbers, and set down only 967, and it will complete the number of 5,500, deduct the sick 342, and I am willing to deduct, the two "licentious disorderly regiments," from Massachusetts; though he acknowledges, they kept with him two days on the march," and there remained near 5000; mentioning this in a public assembly yesterday, I was referred to the general's information to the council of war, who says, "the whole of the force consisted of 2089, effective rank and file." But allowing this to be the case, is an army the worse for having more than one half of its combatants officers, notwithstanding nothing is said of it, in the public letters; General Sinclair writes his private friend, that the enemy came up with the rear of our retreating army, and a hot engagement ensued; other accounts say, that many were killed on both sides, that our troops beat off the enemy, and that Colonel Francis of Massachusetts, and some of his

officers, are among the slain. I shall not write you another letter for I hope to see you soon,

Adieu my friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

P. S. By the letters immediately preceding the disaster, the enemy were said to consist of 5,600, by the enclosed account 7,900; which is the most to be relied on, I know not, both may be uncertain.

BOSTON, April 20, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR,—I most heartily congratulate you on the happy and important news from Europe, which will be conveyed to Congress by Mr. Dean, the brother of our late commissioner, who will be so kind as to deliver you this letter. France has acted with magnanimity, while Britain continues to discover that meanness and poverty of spirit, which renders her still more than ever, contemptible in the eyes of all sensible people. The moderation of France, is such, as becomes a great and powerful nation. Britain, forgetful of her former character, sinks into baseness in the extreme. The one is generously holding out the arm of protection to a people most cruelly oppressed, while the other is practising the arts of treachery and deceit, to subjugate and enslave them. This is a contrast which an ancient Britain would have blushed to have had predicted to him; it is a true contrast, and we will blush for them.

Commissioners we are again told, are coming out to treat with us: this is what we had reason to expect; her only design is to amuse us, and thereby to retard our operations, till she can land her utmost force in America. We see plainly, what part we are to take; to be beforehand of her, and by an early stroke, to give her a mortal wound. If we delay our vigorous exertions till the commissioners arrive, the people abroad may, many of them will, be amused with the flattering prospect of peace, and will think it strange if we do not consent to a cessation of arms, till propositions can be made and digested. This carries with it an air of plausibility, but from the moment we are brought into the snare, we may tremble for the consequence. As there are every where artful tories enough, to distract the minds of the people, would it not be wise for the Congress, by a publication of their own, to set this important intelligence in a

clear light before them, and fix in their minds the first impression in favour of truth? for I do assure you, it begins to be whispered by the tories, and as soon as they dare to do it they will speak aloud, that this is but a French finesse and that Britain is the only real friend of America. Should not the people be informed with the authority of Congress, that Britain persists in claiming a right to tax them, ? and that the new or intended act of Parliament, expressly declares her intention to be only a suspension of the exercise of that right till she shall please again to exercise it—that is, till she shall have lulled them into a state of security—that her commissioners are not to be vested with full powers to finish any treaties, nor even to promise a ratification of them. This will be left in great uncertainty till it shall be considered in Parliament. They are allowed, as one of our friends expresses it, to proclaim a cessation of hostilities, and revoke their proclamation, as soon as in confidence of it, our militia are allowed to go home. They may suspend the operation of prohibitary acts of trade, and take off that suspension, when our merchants in consequence of it, shall have been induced to send their ships to sea. In short, they may do every thing that may tend to distract and divide us, but nothing that can afford us security. The British court have nothing in view, but to divide by means of their commissioners, of this they entertain sanguine expectations; for I am well assured, that they say they have *certain advice*, that they have a large party in the Congress, *almost a majority*, who are for returning to their dependency! this cannot be true. Doctor Franklin, in a letter of the 2d of March, informs me, that America at present stands in the highest light of esteem throughout Europe, and he adds, a return to dependence on England, would sink her into eternal contempt. Be pleased to present my due regards to all friends, and acquaint my worthy colleagues, that Mr. Dean's great haste prevents my writing to them. I intend to set out on my journey to Yorktown next week, where I hope for the pleasure of seeing you. In the mean time be assured, that I am, your affectionate

SAMUEL ADAMS.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

P. S. I thank you for your favour of March 1st, which I received three days ago.

PHILADELPHIA, January 15th, 1781.

MY DEAR SIR—Your second letter came to hand in due season. My much esteemed friend, Mr. Arthur Lee, will take the charge of this. I will say to you as I have said to my Boston friends, who were solicitous to know what treatment he meets with here; the more I have conversed with him, the more I have been confirmed in a good opinion of him, and lamented the mistakes and prejudices of some men, and the wickedness of others. His enemies I think, dare not openly attack his reputation or conduct, but the whispers of envy and malice, have sometimes influence enough to prevent the justice due to the virtuous citizen; when this is the case, it affords a symptom of the decay of public spirit, more threatening to the liberties of a commonwealth than hosts of foreign enemies. Monarchs have their favourites, who serve as pimps on their honest subjects, but republics should examine the conduct of their servants with an impartial eye. And it discovers the want of public virtue, as much to withhold their smiles from the wise and good, as to bestow them on the wicked and unfaithful. Mr. Lee, as yet had neither smiles nor frowns. I am still in hopes, he will meet with the rewards, which I am sure he would have received, if he had returned a few years ago; he will have them, when the trustees of the public shall have fortitude enough, to be uninfluenced by great names and characters, given to men of base and depraved minds. You will ask, when that will be, perhaps not in this age; but the historian will in some future time, draw forth the proofs of his patriotism, and unprejudiced posterity will acknowledge, that Arthur Lee has borne a great share in defending and establishing the liberties of America. I say posterity, for I believe a wiser generation will enjoy the fruits of the toil of patriots and heroes in the present day.

My friend, we must not suffer any thing to discourage us in this great conflict: let us recur to first principles without delay. It is our duty to make every proper exertion in our respective states, to revive the old patriotic feelings among the people at large, and to get the public departments, especially the most important of them, filled with men of understanding and inflexible virtue. It would be indeed alarming, if the United States should entrust the ship in which our all is at stake, with unexperienced or unprincipled pilots. Our cause is surely too interesting to mankind, to be put under the direction of men, vain, avaricious, or concealed under the hypocritical guise of patriotism, without a spark of public or private virtue. We may possibly be more in dan-

ger of this, than many of our honest citizens may imagine. Is there not reason to apprehend, that even those who are inimical to our cause, may steal into places of the highest trust? I need not remind *you*, that men of this character have had seats in Congress from the beginning. Where is Galloway, Low, Allen, and Alexander? If it was so in those times of vigilance and zeal, how much more is it to be expected when the love of many is waxen cold, and their minds are distracted with the pursuit of pleasure and exorbitant riches. We cannot be persuaded to believe, that bad men have been sent by their states with a view of giving a fatal stab to our cause in its infancy; but, is it unreasonable to suppose that their elections were secretly influenced by artful men, with that design? Our most dangerous enemies may be in our bosoms.

My regards to Mrs. Lee, &c. Adieu, and believe me to be your friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

BOSTON, December 9th, 1784.

My dear Sir—You will perceive you are not altogether unacquainted with Colonel Walker, who will deliver you this letter, when you recollect, in the early stage of the late war, he discovered himself to be a warm and judicious friend of our cause; that he advanced his money for the support of our troops when they entered into Canada, and that you afterwards saw him in Philadelphia. He is among the earliest asserters of our liberties, for which he suffered great injury, and nearly the loss of his life, in Canada, long before hostilities began. He carries with him the strongest evidence of the abuse he then met with, and his honourable scars recommend him to the notice and friendship of every true patriot.

Colonel Walker is a man of sense and knowledge, and well acquainted with Canada, having many years ago removed from this town, and resided in that province; he is, therefore, capable of giving you the best information respecting the interest of the United States in that quarter. I know your attachment to an early, constant, and persevering patriot, and that you are ever ready to render to such a man the best service in your power. Adieu my friend. Your affectionate

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Honourable Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

BOSTON, December 23d, 1784.

MY DEAR SIR—I congratulate our country on the choice Congress has lately made of a president. He who fills that chair is the most respectable citizen; and, while he performs his duty well, he adorns the most dignified station in your confederated republic.

You observe in your letter to me, that, at this moment, moderation, wisdom, firmness, and attention, are the principles proper for our adoption. I agree with you, and devoutly wish that every man who has a share in the administration of public affairs, may possess a large portion of those and other great qualities. They are, in a particular manner, necessary to him who presides in the important councils of the American amphyction.

Congress has need to watch, lest the commonwealth suffer harm. I doubt not they will be assiduous in their labours for the public welfare; and I pray God they may be his honoured instruments in exalting to the highest pitch of human happiness that people, who have testified to the oppressed world, that by patience, fortitude, and perseverance, the iron rod can be wrested from the arm of a tyrant, and that all nations may be free, if they will magnanimously contend for their liberty.

By God's blessing on the councils and the arms of our country, we are now ranked with nations; may he keep us from exulting beyond measure. Great pains are yet to be taken, and much wisdom is requisite, that we may stand as a nation in a respectable character. Better it would have been for us to have fallen in our highly famed struggle for our rights, or even to have remained in our ignoble state of bondage, hoping for better times, than now to become a contemptible nation. The world have given us an exalted character, and thus have laid on us a heavy tax! They have raised expectations from us! How shall we meet those expectations? They have attributed to us wisdom! How shall we confirm them in this opinion of us? Inexperienced, as we are, in the refinements of nations, can we expect to shine in the world as able politicians? Shall we then be hackneied in the path of deception, because some others, famed for their dexterity in politics, have long trod that path, and thought they have gained advantage by it? or, because it is said all nations are self-interested, and that *no friendship in treaties* and national transactions, is almost as proverbial as *no friendship in trade*, shall we depart from that excellent rule of equity, the observance of which should be character-

istic of all nations, especially republics, as it is of all good men, to do to others as we would have them do to us? Could we be induced thus to prostitute ourselves, how should we appear in the eyes of the virtuous and wise? Should there be found a citizen of the United States so unprincipled as to ask, what will become of us if we do not follow the corrupt maxims of the world? I should tell him, that the strength of a republic is consolidated by its virtues, and that righteousness will exalt a nation. Was it true, as some affirm, that the old world is absorbed in all kinds of vice, unhumanized and enslaved, it would indeed be a melancholy subject to contemplate, and I should think that common prudence would dictate to a nation, situated as we are, to have as little to do with them as possible. Such indiscriminate censure, however, may spring from ignorance of the world, or unreasonable prejudice. Nations, as well as individuals, have different characters. We should not forget the friendship and kindness of *one*, because we have experienced the injustice and cruelty of *another*. But the inconstancy of friendship, and even infidelity, has been seen often enough among individuals, to lead wise men to suppose it may happen in any case, and to excuse a kind of circumspection; different from base suspicion, consistent with the generous sentiments of friendship, and, considering the weakness of the human mind, a necessary guard. Does not the true policy, the honour and safety of our country, greatly depend upon a national character, consisting, among other particulars, in simplicity and candour in all her public transactions; showing herself, in reality, friendly to those to whom she professes to be a friend. A constant regard to mutual benefit in commercial treaties; suspecting the honesty of those who will not deal with her on equitable principles, and guarding her trade against their selfish designs by wise commercial laws; an exact and punctilious fulfilment of obligations, on her part, to be performed by virtue of *all* treaties; and, an unalterable determination to discharge her national debts with all possible speed. If, my honoured friend, the leading men in the United States would, by precept and example, disseminate, through the lower classes of people, the principles of piety to God, love to our country, and universal benevolence, should we not secure the favour of heaven, and the honour and esteem of the wise and virtuous part of the world? Great Britain, though she has concluded a treaty of peace with us, appears to be not a cordial friend. She cannot forget her unparalleled injustice towards us, and naturally supposes there can be no forgiveness on our part. She seems to have meant nothing more

than a truce. A sensible gentleman, very lately from Canada, informs me that General Haldiman, who is going to England, has ordered those posts to be reenforced, which, by treaty, were to be delivered to us. Encroachments are made, as I apprehend, on our eastern territories. Our fishery may, under some frivolous pretence, be next interrupted. Should we not guard ourselves against British intrigue and factions? Her emissaries, under the guise of merchants, repenting refugees, schoolmasters, and other characters, unless care is taken, may effect another and fatal revolution. The commonwealth of England lasted twelve years, and then the exiled king was restored with all the rage and madness of royalty! A caution to the citizens of the United States, zealously to counteract the hopes our enemies entertain of "discord, disunion, and apathy on our part;" to watch over the public liberty and safety with a jealous eye, and to practise the moral and political virtues, upon which the very existence of a commonwealth depends. Mrs. Adams desires me to present her respectful compliments to you and your connexions.

I am, with great esteem, your affectionate friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee,
President of Congress.

BOSTON, December 3, 1787.

My dear Sir—I am to acknowledge your several favours of the 5th and 27th of October, the one by the post, and the other by our worthy friend, Mr. Gerry. The session of our general court, which lasted six weeks, and my station there requiring my punctual and constant attendance, prevented my considering the new constitution, as it is already called, so closely as it was necessary for me, before I should venture an opinion.

I confess, as I enter the building I stumble at the threshold; I meet with a national government, instead of a federal union of sovereign states. I am not able to conceive, why the wisdom of the convention lead them to give the preference to the former, before the latter. If the several states in the union, are to become one entire nation, under one legislature, the powers of which shall extend to every subject of legislation, and its laws be supreme, and control the whole, the idea of sovereignty in these states, must be lost. Indeed, I think, upon such a supposition, those sovereignties ought to be eradicated from the mind; for they would be *imperia in imperio*,

justly deemed a solicism in politics, and they would be highly dangerous, and destructive of the peace, union, and safety of the nation. And can this national legislature be competent to make laws for the *free* internal government of one people, living in climates so remote, and whose "habits and particular interests" are, and probably always will be so different. Is it to be expected, that general laws can be adapted to the feelings of the more eastern, and the more southern parts of so extensive a nation? It appears to me difficult, if practicable; hence then, may we not look for discontent, mistrust, disaffection to government, and frequent insurrections, which will require standing armies to suppress them in one place and another, where they may happen to arise; or, if laws could be made, adapted to the local habits, feelings, views, and interests of those distant parts, would they not cause jealousies of partiality in government, which would excite envy, and other malignant passions, productive of wars and fighting? But, should we continue distinct sovereign states, confederated for the purposes of mutual safety and happiness, each contributing to the federal head. such a part of its sovereignty, as would render the government fully adequate to those purposes, and *no more*, the people would govern themselves more easily, the laws of each state being well adapted to its own genius and circumstances, and the liberties of the United States, would be more secure than they can be, as I humbly conceive, under the proposed new constitution. You are sensible, sir, that the seeds of aristocracy began to spring even before the conclusion of our struggle for the natural rights of men; seeds, which, like a canker worm, lie at the root of free governments. So great is the wickedness of some men, and the stupid servility of others, that one would be almost inclined to conclude, that communities cannot be free; the few haughty families, think *they* must govern; the body of the people tamely consent, and submit to be their slaves. This unravels the mystery, of millions being enslaved by the few! But I must desist; my weak hand prevents my proceeding farther at present. I will send you my poor opinion of the political structure, at another time. In the interim, oblige me with your letters; and present mine and Mrs. A's best regards to your lady and family, Colonel Francis, Mr. A. L. if with you, and other friends, and be assured, that I am, very affectionately, yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

P. S. As I have thought it a piece of justice, I have ventured to say, that I had often heard from the best patriots from Vir-

ginia, that Mr. G. Mason, was an early, active, and able advocate for the liberties of America.

BOSTON, March 4, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR—Will you permit me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Jeremiah Allen, who expresses his wish to be made known to you, and your circle; he is a gentleman that has seen the world, and is a friend to our happy revolution, and the republican constitutions of the United States. Mr. Allen has given me short notice, which prevents my writing to you more largely, but shall expect your letters frequently. I wish you that wisdom, which is profitable to direct, in the arduous affairs you must attend to. Remember me to your brother, and my friend, Arthur Lee, Esq. and to every one who knows me, and is attached to an efficient, but free federal government.

I am, affectionately, yours,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

BOSTON, April 22, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR—You must not expect long letters from me, for a reason which I have heretofore given you; possibly, however, I may trouble you with more frequent letters. I hope the federal Congress is vested with powers, adequate to all the great purposes of the federal union; and, if they have such adequate powers, no true and understanding federalists would consent, that they should be trusted with more; for more would discover the folly of the people in their wanton grant of power, because it might, and considering the disposition of the human mind, without doubt, would be wantonly extended to their injury and ruin. The powers vested in government by the people, the only just source of such powers, ought to be critically defined, and well understood; least, by a misconstruction of ambiguous expressions, and by interested judges too, more power might be assumed by the government, than the people ever intended they should possess. Few men are contented with less power than they have a right to exercise: the ambition of the human heart grasps at more; this is evinced by the experience of all ages.

Will you give me leave to mention to you, the name of Leonard Jarvis, Esq. a gentleman, to whose agreeable acquaintance, though he is a native of this town, I introduced myself by the request of our worthy friend, General Whipple. Mr. Jarvis is a very sensible republican, and an honest man; he holds the place of comptroller general, in this commonwealth. I believe Mr. Dalton can show you a specimen of his industry, and accuracy in business. It is not by his solicitation, or even knowledge, that I write this. I am induced to it, because I think that good men, living at a distance from the seat of the federal government, and capable of serving the United States, should be made known.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of Senate, in Congress of the United States.

BOSTON, July 14, 1789.

Dear Sir—I have not lately heard from you, and am ready to impute it to the multiplicity of affairs in which your mind is employed. You must not expect that I shall be even with you upon the epistolary score, for the reason which I have heretofore given you. I wish to know from *you* the state of federal affairs as often as your leisure may admit. We organize our state governments, and I heartily wish that their authority and dignity may be preserved within their several jurisdictions, as far as may be consistent with the purposes for which the federal government is designed. They are, in my opinion, petit politicians, who would wish to lessen the due weight of the state governments; for I think the federal must depend upon the influence of these to carry their laws into effect; and while those laws have for their sole object, the promoting the purposes of the federal union, there is reason to expect they will have the due support of the state authorities. *Places* are now become the object of multitudes; I mentioned to you, in a former letter, the name of Leonard Jarvis, Esq., whom I hope you will not forget. Israel Keith, Esq. wishes to have the place of marshal, for this district, he is a gentleman of the law, and was during the war, aid-de-camp to General Heath, who I understand has recommended him to the president. You will gratify the wishes of Mr. Keith, as far as shall consist with your

own ideas of propriety. And be assured, that I am sincerely your friend.

SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. I have been informed that Mr. Edward Church, a native of this town, but now an inhabitant of Georgia, is in the city of New York; I take him to have been a steady friend to the liberties of our country, and a man of sense and integrity; if it will not weary you with applications, I will beg your notice of him, and after your own inquiries afford him your influence, if you shall think it proper, in promoting him to a suitable employment under Congress, in the state of Georgia. This I mention without his solicitation, or even knowledge.

BOSTON, August 24th, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR—Your very acceptable letter of the 8th current, came to me by the post. You flatter me very much when you tell me, that any sentiment of mine can please you: I have always been apprehensive, that through the weakness of the human mind often discovered in the wisest and best of men, or the perverseness of the interested and designing, in as well as out of government, misconstructions would be given to the federal constitution, which would disappoint the views and expectations of the honest among those who acceeded to it, and hazard the liberty, independence, and happiness of the people. I was particularly afraid, that unless great care should be taken to prevent it, the constitution in the administration of it, would gradually, but swiftly and imperceptibly run into a consolidated government, pervading and legislating through all the states, not for federal purposes *only*, as it professes, but in all cases whatsoever; such a government would soon totally annihilate the sovereignty of the several states, so necessary to the support of the confederated commonwealth, and sink both in despotism. I know these have been called vulgar opinions, and prejudices; be it so—I think it is Lord Shaftsbury, who tells us, that it is folly to despise the opinions of the vulgar; this aphorism, if indeed it is his, I eagerly caught from a *nobleman*, many years ago, whose writings in some accounts, I never much admired. Should a strong *federalist*, as some call themselves, see what has now dropt from my pen, he would say that I am an anti-fed, an *amendment monger, &c.*; those are truly vulgar terms, invented and used by some, whose feelings

would be sorely wounded to be ranked among such kind of men, and invented and used for the mean purpose of deceiving and entrapping others, whom *they* call the vulgar; but in this "*enlightened*" age, one should think there was no such *vulgar*, to be thus amused and ensnared. I mean, my friend, to let you know, how deeply I am impressed with a sense of the importance of amendments; that the good people may clearly see the distinction, for there is a distinction, between the *federal* powers vested in Congress, and the *sovereign* authority belonging to the several states, which is the palladium of the private and personal rights of the citizens. I freely protest to you, that I earnestly wish some amendments may be judiciously and deliberately made, without partial or local considerations; that there may be no uncomfortable jarrings among the several powers; that the whole people may in every state contemplate their own safety on solid grounds, and the union of the states be perpetual. I hope that you have recovered your health, so valuable to our country. Your letter requires a further consideration: I will at present only express my astonishment, at the strange and absurd opinion, of our former *republican Connecticut* friend —Tempora mutantur, et hic mutatur in illis.

Your friend,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

BOSTON, August 29th, 1789.

My dear Sir—The power of removing federal officers at the pleasure of the president, is to be found in the constitution, or it is not; if it is, what need was there of an act or decision of Congress, to authorize it? but if it is not, could Congress give so important a power? Liberty—this is the great object of their state governments, and has not the federal constitution the same object in view? If therefore a doubt arises respecting the exercise of any power, no construction, I conceive, should militate with the main design, or object of the charter. If there is a total silence in the constitution, is it not natural to conclude, that an officer holding during pleasure, is removable by the same power that appointed him, whether vested in a single person, or a joint number? I am sensible, it is said, that a single person, being amenable for his exercise of power, will use the utmost circumspection; this may be true, but may not this idea be carried too far in practice? may not some powers vested in a single man, give

him such weight and influence, as to render any restraint from his feeling himself amenable, of little or no effect? If this power lodged in the discretion of a single person, will afford a greater security against corruption, because of his amenability, why should not the power of appointing as well as of removing officers, be given to him? in the one case, the gracious hand may be held forth—in the other, the threatening rod, and both may be used for improper purposes. In England, "the king can do no wrong" is a maxim; his ministers are made accountable for him; and how often have corrupt ministers and counsellors been brought to the block for follies and crimes committed by their royal masters, who can do no wrong? and it may also be asked, how often such ministers and counsellors have found means to get themselves screened from punishment, through the influence of their masters, by procuring parliamentary sanctions to such crimes and follies? But in the removal of officers, the president has not a constitutional council, he must therefore be solely accountable. I need not tell *you*, who have known so thoroughly the sentiments of my heart, that I have always had a very high esteem for the late commander in chief of our armies; and I now most sincerely believe, that while President Washington continues in the chair, he will be able to give to all good men, a satisfactory reason for every instance of his public conduct. I feel myself constrained, contrary to my usual manner, to make *professions* of sincerity on this occasion, because Dr. Gorden, in his history of the revolution, among many other anecdotes, innocent and trifling enough, has gravely said, that I was concerned in an attempt to remove General Washington from command, and mentions an anonymous letter, written to your late Governor Henry, which I affirm I never saw nor heard of, till I lately met with it in reading the history; this is a digression to which a man of my years is liable. Who will succeed the present president, for it is the lot of man to die? perhaps the next, and the next, may inherit his virtues, but my friend, I fear the time will come, when a bribe shall remove the most excellent man from office, for the purpose of making room for the worst. It will be called an error in judgment; the bribe will be concealed; it may, however, be vehemently suspected, and who in times of great degeneracy, will venture to search out and detect the corrupt practices of great men? unless a sufficient check is provided and clearly ascertained, for every power given, will not the constitution and the liberties of the citizens, for want of such checks, be finally subverted? A gentleman of this place, who has suffered much for his attach-

ment to our cause, I conceive has documents in his hands, which would be of importance in the settlement of the eastern boundary of the United States, which appears to have been encroached upon by the British. I wrote so long ago, as last April, to Mr. Dalton, respecting this gentleman, but have never received an answer; he, I suppose, is able to give you an account of Mr. Boyd, the name of the gentleman referred to. I wish you would converse with Mr. Dalton on the subject. The vice-president, however, is probably able, and undoubtedly disposed, to give you the fullest account.

I am sincerely your's,

SAMUEL ADAMS.

P. S. Pray write to me, and let me know the state of your health, and pay my affectionate regards to your brother the doctor.

PARIS, Hotel de Valois, Rue de Richelieu, March 15th, 1780.

My dear Sir—After my last embarkation for Europe, your letter of October the eighth, was brought me, on board the French frigate the Sensible, just upon the point of sailing, so that I had no opportunity to answer it, in America, and, since my arrival in Europe, I have gone through a land journey from Ferrol, in Spain, to Paris, little short of four hundred leagues, in the dead of winter, in such roads and such accommodations, as almost wore me out. I have scarcely recruited myself enough to recollect what I had to do.

I thank you, sir, for your kind congratulations on my return to my family and country, both which I had the inexpressible pleasure to find in perfect health.

My countrymen are so nice, and so difficult to please, in the choice of a constitution of government, that I cannot say how long it will be before they will adopt one; but of this I am very certain, that they have one at present which is very tolerable, and that the temper and genius of that people will not endure a bad one.

You recommend to me to continue in public life, but you practise the reverse yourself. How is this? Are not the same obligations upon you that you think lie upon me? You and I have had experience enough of public life, to be very well convinced that there are great trials of our patience, very little pleasure, and no satifaction at all, to be found in it. I was never very fond of public life myself, but, on the contrary, I avoided it, with the utmost care, for many yea

But stepping into the midst of civil dissensions, when I first entered on the stage of life, it was impossible for me to avoid having an opinion of my own, and principles like those of the majority of my countrymen; these principles I frankly professed at all times, and in all circumstances, however critical and dangerous, which involved me in an unavoidable necessity, when the times grew more tempestuous, to step on board the ship and take my fortune with the crew; it is, and will ever be, the sweetest reflection of my life, that I did so. But I have ever been thoroughly sensible of the instability of a public courser, and have ever endeavoured to preserve my mind prepared to return to my rocks and forests, with tranquillity, which, I am perfectly sure, at present, that I could do, and with pleasure too. Yet, I assure you, I begin to fear that habits will steal upon me, by length of time, which I shall find it hard to break, when the time shall come that I must retire. This time will certainly arrive with the first moment that I cannot serve the public with honour, and some prospect of advantage; and I have many reasons to suspect that the time is not very distant. The Chevalier de la Luzerne, I have reason to think, from an agreeable acquaintance with him, in the course of a passage to America, of forty-seven days, from some knowledge of him that I had before and after, is a candid and impartial man, possessed of no principles or views inconsistent with his public character, and very able to do service to his country and ours. The same of Mr. Marbois. I lament, most sincerely, the unhappy contests that preceded his arrival, and wish that they may be extinguished; but I know too well the circumstances to expect that they will. As to my negotiations, our sons, or grandsons, have a better chance of completing them, than I have; there is, or at least there was, a system of policy and of military operations, that, if it had been pursued, might have given me something to do. It is not my fault, nor the fault of America, that it was not. The fishery and the navigation of the Mississippi, are points of such importance, that your grandson, when he makes the peace, I hope will secure them. I am sure, he will omit nothing in his power to do, for that purpose. You will hear, before you read this, of a series of good fortune, which has happened to Rodney and his fleet; but the allies will be superior by sea, in America and the West Indies, so that we may hope, that the tide will turn. England will remain without allies, although Denmark has done a foolish thing by restoring to the English some prizes, sent into Norway, by the Alliance; she seems to be sorry that she did it. It was upon the principle, that

they had not acknowledged our independence; and that all powers were their enemies, with whom they had no treaty, a principle long since exploded, and of which they are at present ashamed. Ireland and England are following our example; and if France and Spain act with sufficient vigour in America, and in the West Indies, all is ours, with an ordinary success; otherwise all will be aback. But we must persevere; the more success Great Britain has, the more reason we have to dread her, and we ought to be the more determined to hold out for ever.

I am, with great esteem,
Sir,
Your friend and humble servant,
JOHN ADAMS.

Honourable Richard Henry Lee,
Chantilly, Virginia.

[PRIVATE.]

AUTEUIL, near Paris, February 8, 1785.

Dear Sir—It was with very great pleasure, that I learned your return to Congress, and election to the chair; indeed, so many names that are familiar to me, make me wish myself with you. A Congress, so respectable as the present, must have great weight, both at home and abroad; it is only by sending to that assembly the best men, and most respectable characters, that the people can expect to have their union cemented, and authority supported, as it ought to be.

Our joint letter will inform Congress of the state of our negotiations, under our new commissions, and whatever I may say separately, should pass for nothing. But I really don't expect, that any of the great powers will treat with us here. Spain and England, to be sure, will not, and I don't believe the empires will. Prussia will. Denmark and Portugal possibly may, if the gout, or the lethargy, don't remain too long upon their ministers.

The Barbary Powers, I presume, would make no difficulty, which their eagerness for money would not soon get over. Will Congress order us to advance money enough? And may we use what remains in my bank at Amsterdam? Or, has Mr. Morris drawn for all of that? I expect, every day, the ratification of my last loan, and orders what to do with the

cash in bank; and, also, orders whether I am to open a new loan. Will you be so good as to convey the enclosed to your brother, with my best respects to Francis Lightfoot, &c.

With the greatest respect and esteem, I am,

Dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee,
President of Congress.

[PRIVATE.]

AUTEUIL, April 29, 1785.

Dear Sir—The appointment of a secretary of foreign affairs, interrupts the official correspondence with your excellency, and I know too well the constant employment of the time of the President of Congress, to flatter myself with hopes of many private letters.

I may not, however, suffer my son to return home, as he must go by the way of New York, without a letter of introduction to the president, especially, as so old a friend of his father, and so great a supporter of the rights of his country, is at present in the chair. It is now near eight years since I left you in Congress, and I have not found the service abroad less hazardous, or more pleasing, than at home. I am so little in love with it, that instead of breeding my son to the diplomatic trade and expectations, he is going to college and the bar, where he cannot fail to find more pleasure and profit, and less interruption than his father did; at least, such are my wishes and hopes.

I perceive, I have lately received a trouncing in Congress, and, perhaps, not wholly unmerited. When astronomers are calculating the motions of the heavenly bodies, they are often obliged to neglect *les infiniment petites*, that their results may be the more certain. I do not reckon, however, the "debts," and the "slaves," among those *infiniment petites*. They are great and important quantities, and shall have a proportional attention paid to them. Let me beg of you, sir, to urge the necessity of sending me every information upon these, and all other subjects, committed in any measure to my care, which can be obtained; the numbers and value of the negroes, and other property carried off, in violation of the treaty; the quantity and circumstances attending the debts; the measures taken by the states to prevent the

oppression of the citizens, by too sudden executions, and the necessity of them; and the probable advantages even to the creditors themselves, from the delay. Colonel Smith, who, the Marquis informs me, is to assist me in England, will, no doubt, bring with him much information upon these subjects. I have not the pleasure to know that gentleman, but he shall have all the respect and regard from me, which the relation between us requires.

With great and sincere esteem, and respect, I have the honour to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
President of Congress.

Grosvenor Square, Westminster, July 15, 1785.

Dear Sir—I have received the letter you did me the honour to write me on the 28th May, and am fully of your opinion, of the importance of concord between our country and this, and of the causes which obstruct it. The malignity of disappointed men is astonishing; but the change of language, if not of sentiment, of some who have not been disappointed, is more so. In truth, sir, some who foresaw the success of the American cause, attached themselves to it, as a scaffold, on which to mount into power; but having arrived at the summit, they neglect the ladder, and have adopted the very passions and principles of those whom we, not they, have driven off the stage. I don't apply this censure to all: on the contrary, the majority of the present ministry, I believe, think pretty justly, and would do right if they could; but government, although at present possessed of decided majorities in both houses of Parliament, is very weak. There is great impatience and discontent in the nation, and great parties are watching the present minister. If there should be any change, it is problematical whether the coalition would come in, or the Marquis of Lansdown, the Marquis of Buckingham, &c.; the latter party possess sentiments of the relations of commerce between America and Great Britain, the most just of the two; but it is my duty to be explicit. Conviction in administration is not enough; they cannot follow their own lights, and the nation must be made to feel. This is a work of time, and it is dangerous work, because it may, in such inflammable circumstances, provoke war. I hope that persons and property in America, will be held

sacred; that nothing will be done by the people, but in the legal way of petition, and peaceable associations; but I hope they will never have done petitioning, and associating, until the states unite in giving Congress full power to make treaties of commerce and navigation with Great Britain, either by a perfect freedom of trade on both sides, or equal and reciprocal prohibitions or discouragements.

Your letter to Mr. Steptoe, I have delivered to a gentleman, Mr. Stordale, much acquainted with persons connected in India, who will be so good as to forward it, and if I can be of any service to Mr. Steptoe's views, I will. But America and India, are two ideas in the mind of a Briton, which produce an explosion. If an American should be known to solicit an employment in India, for an American, the East Indies would instantly be seen, in imagination, independent of Britain, and in alliance with the United States and France.

This nation, sir, sees that their sciences, arts, trade, commerce, navigation, and wealth, and power, are all hurrying over to America; and the prospect is so humiliating to their pride, so mortifying to their vanity, that they lose their patience, and their final exclamation is, "I had rather America had been annihilated, than that she should have carried her point." Nor is this sentiment peculiar to Englishmen. A great Spanish minister has very lately said at Madrid, that "he wished all America, north and south, under water." European ministers expect a great deal of trouble from America, and they all know that she will always prevail. We know too, that we shall have a great deal of trouble from Europe; but, I hope, we are neither so impious, so inhuman, or so silly, as to wish her annihilated, or under water. The jealousies of old physicians, and lawyers, of young and rising genius in their professions, often stimulate them to acts of ungenerosity and injustice, which, however, instead of crushing the youth, only sharpen his ingenuity, and increase his caution and industry. Nations are like individuals, and Europe must allow America fair play: that is all the world wants; and she will always have one half of Europe, to see that she has fair play, from the other half. The European powers can never agree; there are now on foot, three attempts, which will all prove abortive. Mr. Crawford has been a year at Paris, to negotiate a treaty of commerce with France; and Mr. Woodford, lately British minister in Denmark, is now appointed to treat here with Del Campo, the Spanish minister; and a Mr. Bordieu, told me yesterday, that he is just appointed to negotiate some convention be-

tween the French and English East India Companies. But these attempts, if ever sincere, will produce nothing.

With great and sincere esteem,

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obliged friend, and very humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

[PRIVATE.]

GROSVENOR SQUARE, Westminster, September 6, 1785.

Dear Sir—I had yesterday the honour of receiving your letter of the first of August, and I pray you to accept of my thanks for your kind attention and obliging civilities to my son. It was the first news we had of him, since he sailed from L'Orient. I hope that, after remaining in New York long enough to pay his respects where they were due, he made haste to Boston. Your reasoning, sir, both upon the powers of Congress, and the subject of the debts, is very just, and is such as I have urged upon all occasions, both to ministers and creditors. Nevertheless, I expect, that the debts will be urged as a breach of treaty, and as the justification, excuse, or pretence for withholding the posts. I can get no answer from ministers, neither in writing nor in conversation; they make me handsome bows, look at me with smiling countenances, give me civil words, but not one word of explicit answer, except in two or three points, Mr. Pitt and Lord Carmarthen gave me their opinions, which I have reported to Mr. Jay. I hope the states will not wait a moment in hopes of any commercial relief from this court, but proceed to prohibit all exports from the United States in British vessels, until we shall have an open trade or a treaty. A navigation act, in my opinion, will extort terms from Britain, if any thing can; if not, our freights will be a great fund of wealth, our ships and mariners, will be castles and garrisons to us, and the mutual dependence of the states upon one another, will be a strong cement of our union, in interest and affection.

The present ministry, may be the great men they are represented to be; I will not affirm the contrary. It is problematical yet. Their plans relative to the United States, relative to Ireland, relative to Holland, Germany, France, Spain, their own finances, &c., do not yet demonstrate them to be well informed and judicious, much less deep and great

statesmen. Their schemes have been temporary and partial, as if adopted upon the spur of the occasion, to remove a present pressure, or silence a partial clamour. If they had carried their point in Ireland, I will not say what I think would have been their conduct towards America. From the hints which dropped from Mr. Pitt, I am of opinion, they are determined to keep the posts, at least until something further shall be done about the debts. As to taking off the alien duty upon oil, and admitting our ships to their market, the national voice and public opinion are decidedly against it, and therefore you must furnish the ministry, in your navigation acts, an excuse to the nation, before they will venture upon it. I have sent your letter to Mr. Steptoe, but I don't believe I shall be able to serve him in his views; if I can, I will. The United States must establish a factory of their own, among the French, English, Dutch, Danes, Swedes, &c.; the natives will be glad to see them, and the other European factories too, if our factory would treat them with equity and humanity. We should be the most favoured nation. Why should we come to Europe for East India goods? Why should we purchase European manufactures, if we can have India manufactures equally good, and for half the price? Our vessels may go a trading, and carry any thing to sell to the European factors, and get money of them, to buy a cargo of the natives in return. This letter will be delivered you by Mr. Storer, a gentleman who assisted me in Mr. Thaeters sickness at the Hague, and afterwards in the hurry of the conferences for the peace, at Paris.

With great respect and esteem, I have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

CAMBRIDGE, 9th February, 1789.

My dear Sir—I am sure you will believe me, when I inform you, that it gave me the highest satisfaction to hear that you and your colleague were appointed members of the Federal Senate. I have much to say to you, upon the state of public affairs, but shall wave them at present to inform you, that our friend the Hon. Mr. Otis wishes to fill the office of secretary to the Senate, and that from a long acquaintance with him, I think him, as well on account of his early attachment to the cause of America, previous to the war, and of his services during it, as of his diligence, integrity,

and abilities, a candidate who will do the highest honour and justice to the office, if conferred on him. Indeed I most sincerely wish it, because he is amongst the number of unfortunates who have suffered by the war, and has an expensive but worthy family. If he should not succeed in this, which I hope he will, perhaps you may promote some other appointment, which will be equally beneficial to him. I have only time to inform you, that Mrs. Gerry joins me in sincere regards to yourself and your colleague, and ladies, and be assured I am with the highest respect,

Your friend and humble servant,

ELBRIDGE GERRY.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Member of the Federal Senate, at New York.

December 10th, 1778.

Dear Sir—It was not possible for me to acknowledge your favour of November the 29th, by the same post, which gave me the pleasure of hearing, that you and your lovely family were well: nor will I now particularly notice the subjects you hinted to me. I will rather give you a few entries of our journals, and an anecdote of our friend Adams, to enable you to read the prints with a proper comprehension of the plotting spirit of some of the chaps who are scribbling therein, and of the serpentine, malicious, and elusive course, which others have been contriving for themselves since you left us. Temple came to this city about ten days ago, bringing letters of high recommendation, both to Congress and to the delegates of Massachusetts. His letters were from the council of state, Governor Trumbull, General Washington, Governor Livingston, and the first whigs indisputably of Boston. Mr. Adams conducted Mr. Temple from his lodgings to the president's, to introduce the delivery of the mentioned letters; this *simple call at* the door of the man's lodging, is termed to the public, "so *frequent* in *exchange* of visits," and probably by the very tall wiseacre, who was for constituting a semblance of the French lieutenancy of police, to *fall in with, pimp upon*, and otherwise *entrap*, all visiting strangers, even so far as to write fictitious letters and intercept the answers. But I drop this pitiful subject, only remarking that the hint in the prints, is a good answer to all our recommendatory letters, for there was nothing public or private, which Mr. Temple ought not rather to have communicated by letter, than by a visit. I must give you my key to his whole pro-

[illegible] Is not the end of the practice—"Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

November 30th. [illegible] (by motion.

Resolved, That Congress meet on Wednesday evening, at [illegible] to resume the proceedings of the courts martial on the trials of Major-General Lee, Major-General Schuyler, and Major-General St. Clair.

Read a letter of November 30th. from Silas Deane, Esq. to the President.

Resolved, That after to-morrow, Congress will meet, two hours in the day every evening, beginning at six o'clock, Saturday excepted, until the present state of our foreign affairs is taken into consideration.

Read a letter of the 4th. from Silas Deane, Esq. to the President.

Resolved, That Monday evening be assigned for hearing Mr. Deane, and that he be notified to attend.

Resolved, That Silas Deane, Esq. report to Congress in writing, as soon as may be, his agency of their affairs in Europe; together with any information which he may think proper.

That Mr. Deane be informed, that if he hath any thing to communicate to Congress in the interim, of immediate importance, he shall be heard to-morrow evening, at six o'clock.

Mr. Deane on the 5th. notwithstanding our resolve of the 4th. upon his letter of November 30th. It is true, he dates November 30th. It gives us more the air of precedency: but if he was really apprized of the public why write to us on the 5th? He had made himself a culprit before our bar, by refusing to answer any interrogatories—evading to criminate himself." It was the cause of this delay. I need add no more to your [illegible] sensible, your humble servant, affectionately.

J. LOVELL.

August 17th, 1778.

Dear Sir—Your favour of the 7th. is in my hand. I am surprised that you had not then heard of the arrival of Ford, at [illegible]. Mr. Adams was at Braintree on the 5th. and Count Lauzun in Boston. I have no despatches from either: but I have a letter from Nantz, of May 25th, an account of which you will see in the paper of to-morrow,

as well as the continuation of Rowland's communications, of part of what you think ought to be published. You talk of your having a sort of right to a copy of the papers sent by Arthur. You little know of the droll motion made by your *merry* friend, to stigmatize Arthur for having enclosed to an individual, what he desired might be communicated to a select committee of Congress, to prevent the consequences of a *palam* examination of the vouchers. But, as on the one hand I contended for an open reading of the whole that was sent, I most easily convinced the House, that every officer in their service, has a right to communicate *such* papers as these in question, to any individual friend, on whose judgment he chooses to depend, either to present or burn resignations, memorials, and defences, these being personal concerns; and I mentioned having by me some things, thus enclosed, upon which I should act my sovereign pleasure. I thought this necessary, that I may act with a good grace, if I should see cause to give in any of the papers now in my trunk, at a time when it would not be possible to prove a late arrival. The motion was withdrawn, inch by inch, I pledging myself to prove that Congress never had an *official* paper kept from them by the mode mentioned in the motion, viz. covering *despatches* of a minister to an individual. I mean, I pledged myself so far as concerns Arthur Lee, Esq. Your brother was totally mistaken as to D.'s credit here; but I wait with impatience to know more by Mr. Adams. Our Penobscot expedition is not yet well over. Collier *may* do great hurt there. I have a few lines from Mr. Samuel Adams; he is, as you think, greatly engaged in town and *body* meetings, and in the general assembly. They have great expectation of mending the currency by vigorous taxation and loan; but I look for credit to the poor *eastern* states mainly from a successful expedition, though even in that case, W. H. D. will be against them. He spouted an invidious motion about their fleet to relieve South Carolina and Georgia. Observe the cursed rascality of sending to New York, as well as to Boston, the Paca-Drayton effort. Though, in the former case, there is a supererogatory section, of its being a committee information.

I find that paper is stolen from me. It was either Poughkeepsie or Fishkill, you can get it by inquiring of your printer. I have recovered it. The party are provoked beyond measure, at seeing the vouchers sent out by Rowland; but I tell them, "they are free for any member who chooses to use them, only it is at his peril, if he does not guard against offending France, Spain, or Prussia, or exposing *ho-*

nest whigs to danger. The affair of Barker Fort can be put in a light to damn D's, virulence exerted under pretended care of the public safety. Simple views must be first given of the state of facts; and, at the close, a freedom in inferences, reflections, and brands, may be taken; indeed, this part may be performed in the different states upon an exhibition of vouchers here. It will have more effect by springing from different quarters; the main point will be to establish the propriety of supporting merit in republics against envy and falsehood, rather than suffering it to be crushed from a foolish idea of convenience to the public. The contrary would be to induce eventually a *maximum*, to avoid a present *quid detrimenti*. I wish your health may suffer you to attend to this. *Speeches* should be *short*, to be *generally* read.

J. LOVELL.

I will attend to your request about Beaumarchai's charge. I have no reasons now in favour of giving the resignation; but rather the opposite.

18th December.

DEAR SIR—A packet arriving this week, directed to the committee of correspondence, and containing only a letter from Berlin *for Congress*, I took the liberty of opening one directed to our worthy friend, Samuel Adams, in your brother Arthur's hand writing, of which I send you a copy, so far as was material to the public.

PARIS, July 31st.

"Journeys to the courts of Spain and Berlin, have satisfied me that the determined system of Europe is to let us struggle through the war as we can. With the warmest professions of friendship, with the strongest declarations of their being interested in our success, and therefore ardently wishing it, nothing can move them from their quietism and caution, which are carried to a perfectly ridiculous extreme. Spain is totally occupied with its little Portuguese war; France is governed by timidity in the excess; and the three great northern powers are immersed in schemes of plundering the Turk and the Pole, and dividing the spoil. In this situation of Europe, notwithstanding the justice of our cause has rendered all men in our favour, it is not wonderful that

you are left, like Hercules in his cradle, to strangle the serpent that is the terror of Europe. In this situation, it is happy for us that the extravagance of the enterprise has already exhausted the means of our enemies; that, it is certain, this is the last campaign of vigour they can make against us. When our point is secured by the energy of our own exertions, we shall think it happy, that the fears and occupations of the powers of Europe have prevented them from forming treaties with us—when our situation would have given them infinite advantages. When our distresses are past, and our fears subsided, we shall be enabled to see, and to follow our interests in the alliances we form; which I do not think would be entirely the case at present."

Besides this public matter of your brother's letter, he adds a note. "A Mr. Carmichael obtained from me a letter to you, under a pretence of his going immediately to America. I have since found him to be a very unworthy person, whom I can by no means recommend to your patronage." You will see more sentiments of this kind written to Colonel Francis. I wish these hints had come before our late election of Mr. C——.

"One of Monticu's vessels has arrived at Portsmouth, with the following articles for the continental account.

48 brass four pounders, with carriages complete.
19 nine inch mortars.
2500 bombs, nine inch.
2000 four pound shot.
A large quantity of entrenching tools.
3000 fuses.
1,110 ditto for dragoons.
About 18,000 lbs. gunpowder.
61,051 tierces Brimstone.

Beaumarchais's secretary, Francy, is arrived at Portsmouth, and is expected here daily; perhaps he will bring letters from the gentlemen at France, to our committee; but they cannot be later than September. Mr. Gerry has one dated Nantz, the 5th of that month, which speaks of the cowardly disposition of the French court. I do not count this an absolute contradiction of Bingham's letter of October 13th, because a gentleman from America, trading at Nantz, September 5th, might be a stranger to ministerial measures entered into, time enough to reach M. Beaumarchais, through the General of Martinique, by October 13th. However, sir, though I attempt to reconcile their accounts, so as to make

the story of war stand, yet, I am very far from being sanguine in the belief of it. Your brother's history of the temper of the several courts, seems by far the most natural of any other which has come to hand. I expect we shall have an enormous mercantile account from De Francy. I suppose, it is the house of Hortales & Co. which your brother William hints his fears about. You see how necessary his presence was near Mr. D . . . . . ; a letter, from this same gentleman, to Mr. Morris, came open to Mr. Hancock, but the letter covering appeared to be private, so that the enclosed was sent on to Mr. M., without Congress coming to the knowledge of the contents.

Yours, &c.

JAMES LOVELL.

28th December, 1777.

DEAR SIR—I shall leave you to get news at large, respecting our army, and the transactions of Congress, from your worthy brother, only saying as to the first, that the extremity of these injuries, which were prophesied some months ago, are now realized in the commissariate; and that we, also, now find most of our high expectations from the expensive establishment of the quartermaster, had not a thorough foundation; General Washington has made this evident, and shown it fairly to be the clue to unravel our many seemingly mysterious, past miscarriages, in the field. As to the second, I will remark, that, few in number, we have vast business, and though we have had particular reason to regret your absence, and that of other ancient members, we must and will go through with what times and circumstances demand to be immediately done. From me, you will chiefly look for foreign affairs. What I have before written, did not destroy Bingham's narrative; what I now communicate goes near to do it; but it leaves our intelligence from St. Pierres, Miquilon, in good force. Private persons at Nantz, September 5th, might easily be ignorant of what Bingham might know, through a public channel, at Martinique, October 13th; but, Mr. Williams gives me the following, in a private correspondence, of October 18th. The politics of this country seem to be, as from the beginning of the war; they rejoice at every event in favour of America, because they wish to see their old enemy crushed; but *that* enemy is still so formidable to them that they do not seem inclined to lend a helping hand to us openly; and every piece of bad news

from America, as it raises the tone of the English ambassador, increases their fears, and the effect is felt throughout all the sea-ports of the kingdom. We have lately had two Jamaicamen seized by the admiralty, and, I suppose, they will be returned to the English; it is true, prizes are still brought in and privately sold; but the purchasers, on account of the risk of having them given up, do not allow above one-third of the value: thus, do the French merchants make great sums of money, and the policy of the nation goes hand in hand with the interests of individuals; it is, indeed, pretended, that matters will take a turn soon. The reason, they say, that war is not more thought of at present, is, that their fishermen and Baltic ships are still out: by the first, they expect an additional number of seamen; and, by the last, a full supply of naval stores, which would be intercepted should a rupture take place now; but that, when these shall be safely arrived, they will hold a very different language to the English. Two or three months will convince us whether these professions are sincere or not; but, I apprehend, some singular success on the part of America, would do more in our favour than any other circumstance.

The Rawleigh and Alfred arrived at L'Orient the 6th of October; between that and the 15th, they had suddenly sold two Jamaicamen, for only 9,700 sterling, as the other two at Nantz, taken by a Massachusetts captain, Kendrick, had been seized; one Nicholson, brother of the Baltimore commander, had a fine frigate, just launched at Nantz, of twenty-four twelves on her gun deck, and six sixes on her quarter, and would be at sea in November, with the other two, which were hove down at L'Orient; the commissary of which port had orders, from the ministry, to supply every thing out of the royal magazines for Thompson and Hindman. Poor Johnson was taken two days after he left Morlaix, by a cutter of heavier metal than his, having fought five hours, lost many men, as well as his enemy, and being towed, a wreck, into Dover. I doubt not, our gentlemen will exert every nerve to protect him from the malice which will be ready to show itself against him after his successes in the Irish channel. Our old Holland correspondent gives us, on the 2d of August, a long detail of Samuel and John Adams's wife and children at the Hague, where, it seems, one or the other of those gentlemen was born and married, but forsook his wife and family to make his fortune in America. "Sir Joseph York knows this, but pretends to be ignorant of it" say their relations; "and though," says Dumas, "this is, at bottom, only a bagatelle, yet I wish to have some short account of the

honourable persons of Mr. Samuel and Mr. John Adams, that I may undeceive our public and confound the impostor, which characterizes impudent and base enemies; they decry you, in Europe, as paltroons, and they, at the same time, pray and intreat the European powers not to permit you to buy arms from them; and, while they fear they shall not be able to destroy virtue, they seek to blacken and calumniate it."

"Let us pass," says he, "this miserable tale to what is more and more agreeable. The prince of Waldeck has two fine regiments of his subjects in the service of this republic, the contract for whom is near expiring; the court of London, knowing this, pressed that prince to let her have them; but he answered, that he had proposed a new contract to their high mightiness, and had demanded some conditions in his own favour, to be added to the former ones; that, if their high mightiness would not consent to them, he would let the king have them, upon the conditions last demanded; but that he could not refuse them to the republic, if she preferred to keep them.

Yours, &c.

J. LOVELL.

BOSTON, 11th April, 1789.

SIR—Your arrival in Congress gives great satisfaction to the old revolutionists in this state. While I presume to congratulate you on the subject, I wish to indulge myself the pleasure of mentioning the success of the supporters of your old friend and compatriot, the honourable Samuel Adams; he has been exceedingly maltreated, or you would have now had him by the hand in the Senate of the United States; but the votes in our late election, a sample whereof, is exhibited in the Gazette enclosed, will evince how much he lives in the esteem of his fellow citizens.

We have a very uneasy party in this commonwealth; composed of the seekers of emoluments under government, and of the old anti-revolutionists; they hate democracy on different principles.

The imprudence of this party, was the sad cause of the disgrace of our people, in the year 1786. The measures their influence obtained, produced that uneasiness, which ended in an insurrection. They now pant for a rebellion, because they think it would end in a standing army, and finally produce a monarchy. But our people are disposed to live quietly,

and when Congress shall pay a proper attention to the amendments, proposed to the general constitution all will be easy; unless a particular partiality is shown by the general government to those, who have affected to be the champions of it. Our people have good sense enough to know, that anarchy, must end in despotism: they have all property, and they want laws and government to support and protect it; they feel as freemen, and they act in that character. However they may be despised and scandalized, by men who cannot gain their confidence; they will cheerfully support a good government.

I send you ..... of General Leonard Jarvis, Esq. he is an honest man and useful to his country.

I have the honour to be, with respect and veneration, your most obedient and very humble servant,

JAMES SULLIVAN.

NEW YORK CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR SIR—When I had the honour of your company, and acquaintance at Philadelphia, you made it a request, that I would exert my poor abilities, in the honest endeavour to keep my fellow citizens in the line of their duty, their interest, and honour. I freely made you the promise, and I did honestly and faithfully perform it.

I am informed that the committee of this city, have drawn up a representation of Mr. Rivington's case, for the animadversions of that respectable body, of which you are a member. The consequence of this step, will undoubtedly strike your mind, it is the giving a new power to the Congress; our association, hath given them the legislative, and this now tenders them the judicial supremacy.

The power of government, as of man, is to be collected from small instances, great affairs are more the objects of reflection and policy. Here both join, a mild and favourable sentence, will conciliate the opinions of mankind, and what is the force of opinion, a gentleman who has made it his study to investigate the nature of government, need not be told. I will not pretend to offer you any reasoning on this subject, because it will be tedious to repeat things, which strike your mind at the first glance; but I can venture to assure you, that a favourable sentence to this creature, will be highly agreeable to most men here. The history of his conduct is simply this; his company, his acquaintances, his friends, were warm advocates for the power of government. Indifferently wise, his mind took a wrong bias from interest, deference for the sentiments of others and opposition. A tool in prosperity; a cast off in adversity, he solicits the assistance of that body, which his press has aspersed; magnanimity will dictate to that body, the true line of conduct. The liberty I take in writing to you can only be excused by the intention I have to do good; this I trust will be a sufficient apology, for sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

GOV. MORRIS.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA, May 28th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—The friends of virtuous liberty in New York, have certainly effected a most important change, in the political system of that flourishing city. I can gratulate you sir, and your worthy associates in this happy revolution: it is most certain that a profligate ministry, have greatly relied on the assistance of your fine fertile province, for carrying into execution their cruel system, a system by which existing millions, and millions yet unborn, are to be plunged into the abyss of slavery, and of consequence deprived of every distinction, that marks the man from the beast. But happily for the cause of humanity, the colonies are now united, and may bid defiance to tyranny and its infamous abetters. You will see that Mr. Rivington's case, is involved in all of a similar nature, which are to be determined on by the colony conventions, where the offence is committed. I am sorry for the honour of human nature, that this man, should have so prostituted himself, in support of a cause the most detestable that ever disgraced mankind. But he repents, and should be forgiven; it is not yet too late to exert his powers, in defence of the liberty and just rights of a much injured country. I I wish you happy sir, and I assure you that I am, with singular esteem, your friend and countryman,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

TICONDEROGA, October 19th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I am indebted to you in a thousand thanks for your polite letter, which Mr. Caldwell was so good as to deliver me this day. The utmost of my ambition, is to approve myself a good citizen; an important and comprehensive epithet. You will pardon me if I refer you to my public letters, for an account of our operations; nothing as yet that is decisive. The intelligence which I have received from Congress, respecting the ministerial designs on Hudson river, gives me much uneasiness, as I think it must to every friend to America, acquainted with the geography of that part of the country; but a timely attention, and a vigorous execution of any plan, that may be formed to guard against the evil, may frustrate the designs of the ministry. Were I in Congress, and capable of conveying my ideas with propriety, I should speak for hours on the subject, in order to impress gentlemen, were it needful with gentlemen, of the necessity

of taking this matter in hand without delay. My good wishes attend you through life. I am, dear sir, most sincerely,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PHILIP SCHUYLER.

Dear Sir—Soon after your absence from this city, we began to have a little military news stirring. On the 11th instant, General Mifflin, by directions from General Washington, acquainted the inhabitants at a meeting in the state house yard, that from the late preparations of the enemy, their intentions were for this city. His address was received with as much spirit as it was delivered, and the meeting unanimously resolved to turn out, agreeable to the militia law. On the 13th, at night, Generals Howe and Cornwallis moved to Somerset, eight miles from Brunswick, and on the 19th, at night, retreated again to Brunswick. On the morning of the 22d, they evacuated the last mentioned place, and retreated to Amboy. I am at a loss to account for General Howe's movements on any other plan than the following: his short march from Brunswick to Somerset, afforded him an opportunity of trying the disposition of the states of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, as to the turning out of the militia, which was very necessary for him to be acquainted with before he ventured too far into the country; it was like moving the previous question, and the issue was against him, for the militia of both states took the alarm instantly. It then became necessary for him to make a retreat to Amboy and a feint of passing over to Staten island, in order that the militia, which his first march had raised, might be dismissed, and the three thousand men from General Putnam, countermanded; both those events have happened, and last Thursday General Howe left Amboy, and made his appearance in the country. He is, I believe, too weak to hope for a decisive victory, and is trying to win it as a game; besides which, as this is their only army, they are obliged to preserve it as an army of observation, on the motions of the French and Spaniards in the West Indies.

I sincerely regret your absence, both on account of your private friendship, and your public services, and I have the pleasure (if I may call it such, for I wish the occasion had not happened) of hearing many others of the same opinion. A man that sets out upon a public bottom, must always expect to be privately underminded, in some quarter or other. I have often remarked, that those who are benefited by the pub-

lic service of another, without feeling themselves rivalled, will always be the friends of merit, but those who are benefited *by* being rivalled, will from envy, ever be its enemies: and thus by tracing a received affront to its true cause, and reflecting philosophically thereon, a person may often draw very agreeable consolation therefrom. We have had nothing stirring of news for three weeks past, when the enemy marched from Amboy, they endeavoured to surprise the division under Lord Stirling; we lost two, if not three pieces of artillery. No other material loss. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate humble servant,

THOMAS PAYNE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 1777.

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
of Chantilly, Westmoretand co.
Virginia.

MORRISTOWN, State of New Jersey, October 27, 1780.

SIR—I have been duly honoured by your agreeable favour of the 24th ultimo, enclosing a letter to the director general, which has been delivered. Since the 22d November, the date of a letter you mention to have received, I have written two other letters, containing such matters as I should be unwilling to have fallen into the possession of some persons, whose heads and hearts, are unworthy of my confidence, and who I fear have filched those letters under way, as you make no mention of having received them. It appears, to me, sir, your apprehensions are well founded, when you observe "I fear the season is much too far advanced, for any decisive operations to be attempted against New York, this campaign," &c., and that your queries claim the highest attention, when you farther add, "may not the winter be most profitably employed in retaking Charlestown, and recovering the two southern states, from our enemies," &c.; the reasons you mention in favour of the attempt, are weighty, and the successes, which have lately attended our arms in that quarter, render the operations you have proposed, both for the winter and spring, less hazardous. The spirited exertions of your state, in raising three thousand recruits for the continental army, and one thousand good western militia, at so critical a period, evinces a redoubled attachment to our cause, and add much to the prospect of success in our operations in that vicinity. I cannot quit the subject, without congratulating you, my dear sir, on the appointment of Major General Greene, to take the command of the southern army. That

gentleman's great abilities in the field, his extensive knowledge of the various departments in the army, gives him the advantage of almost every other general officer in America, in immediately reducing to order and system, an army and affairs, which at present are almost "without *form* and *void*." But alas! of what avail will be the exertion of the greatest generals, unless fully aided with *men*, *money*, and the other necessary *supplies?* In the present dangerous situation of our public affairs, can this aid be furnished? Our treasury is empty, our military and naval stores in that quarter are much exhausted, and I fear the resources of that country, under its present embarrassments, will prove incompetent for those other supplies. Your zeal and exertion in the cause of our distressed country, on every former occasion, forbid my mentioning a single argument to induce your utmost efforts in the present alarming conjuncture. General Greene entertains a high opinion of your influence and abilities, and wishes for your assistance, in support of such measures as he may find necessary to adopt for recovering the southern states, or rather what is more probable, to prevent the enemy, from making further progress; and as the general, is a gentleman in whom you may place the most unreserved confidence, not only as an officer, but as a private gentleman; I have not the least reason to doubt, but there will be a perfect harmony and free correspondence between you and that gentleman, and which I am sure will be assiduously cultivated on his part. The Honourable Arthur Lee, passed through this place a few days since, on his way to Philadelphia; but I was so unhappy as not to have the pleasure of seeing him, though I have been honoured by a line from him, since his arrival there. As the present situation of the southern states bespeaks the theatre of war, at least for the ensuing winter, I should esteem it an addition to the obligations I should otherwise be under, by being favoured with a letter from you, as often as you may find opportunity and leisure, for that purpose. With sentiments of real friendship, I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

NATHANIEL PEABODY.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

PENNSYLVANIA CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 20, 1776.

MY DEAR SIR—An officer (a German by birth) who has served in Russia and Hanover, several campaigns, called upon me a few hours ago, and after producing certificates, &c. that he *now* holds a captain's commission under the empress of Russia, *gave* me the following information in confidence. He says, that he is personally acquainted with many of the Hessian officers and privates, now in Howe's army; that, as they serve for pay only, he thinks the bounty, pay, and clothing, offered by Congress, so much above what they now enjoy, that, if they were properly tendered to them, they would serve us with more cheerfulness than the king of Britain. He offers to go in person, into Howe's army, at the risk of his life, and is sanguine enough to think, he could immediately bring off two hundred recruits with him. He demands continental money only, to pay the bounties; if he fails, he will return the money: he very justly objected to taking gold or silver, as it might be useful to them in Howe's camp. I submit these hints to your consideration. I am bound to inform you, that the captain, (who, from his certificates, is a baron) appears very modest, and possesses the manners and address of a gentleman. He added, in the course of our conversation, that we had many warm friends in Russia, and that a majority of that nation expressed a dislike at the thoughts of being employed to fight against us. He thinks there is no probability of any troops being procured from that quarter next summer. If you think the above scheme practicable, please to mention it in Congress. I am at a loss what to advise in the affair; at any rate, communicate your opinion, or the determination of Congress, to Mr. Philip Bochm, in Philadelphia, who will communicate it to the baron. If he is encouraged, he will wait upon Congress, and receive his instructions from them. We are much blamed by the whigs, and ridiculed by the tories, for leaving Philadelphia so suddenly. All the back counties near Philadelphia, are in motion. Several hundred of the militia, join General Washington daily; I refer you to Mr. Samuel Perviance, for particulars. I have a thousand things to say to

you. Vigour, firmness, and decisive measures, are more necessary than ever. Dispute less, and do more in Congress, or we are undone. Compliments to your brother, and the worthy members of the weekly club. I am on my way to Bristol, being summoned to attend the Philadelphia militia, for a few weeks.

Your's, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

P. S. I need not suggest to you the necessity of secrecy, if the baron's scheme is adopted.

NEAR BRISTOL, December 21, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Wherever I go I bear in my mind, the small share of the weight of our dear country's happiness, which the state of Pennsylvania hath committed to my care. I wish sometimes, to throw my mite into the councils of the Congress, but as this is impossible for the present, I beg leave to suggest such things as have occurred to me, in my passage through Philadelphia to this place, and submit it to your good sense to make any use of them you may think proper. I need not inform you of the general disposition of the people, in and near Philadelphia, to refuse continental money upon the late prospect of General Howe's getting possession of the city. General Putnam threatening to confine such people as refused it, and declaring the debt for which the money was offered, to be void, produced only a temporary remedy against the evil. People who had goods, refused to sell them; and men who had money out at interest, either refused to give up bonds, or kept out of the way when continental money was offered for them. The legislatures of America look up to Congress for a remedy equal to the danger of the disease. Suppose you recommend to every state to make a law, not only to forfeit the debt for which our money is offered, but to *fine* the person who refuses it, *severely*; this will be more effectual than imprisonment, which from becoming so common for tory practices, has now lost its infamy. The punishment, in this case, strikes directly at that principle in human nature, which is the source of the contempt into which our money has fallen, I mean avarice, and a want of public spirit. Pray don't let this matter be neglected, our salvation hangs upon it. I tremble every time I think of the danger of the further progress of the refusal of our money.

Connected with the above subject, is the state of the loan office; if possible, let the resolutions for the last emission of five millions of dollars, be *concealed*. I hope that it will be the last resolution of that kind that will appear on our journals. If it is not, the whole continent must complain of our injustice, in allowing only four per cent. for the money now deposited in the loan office, unless we can give positive assurance that we shall pay it in hard money. I have learnt from many people, and among others, from two New England officers, that the four eastern states will find great difficulty in raising their quota of men, owing to that excessive rage for privateering, which now prevails among them. Many of the continental troops now in our service, pant for the expiration of their enlistments, in order that they may partake of the spoils of the West Indies. At a moderate computation, there are now not less than ten thousand men belonging to New England, on board privateers. New England, and the continent, cannot spare them. They have a right at this juncture, to their services, and to their blood. We must have an army; the fate of America must be decided by an army. It must consist of seventy or eighty thousand men, and they must all be fit for the field before the first day of May next. Since the captivity of General Lee, a distrust has crept in among the troops, of the abilities of some of our general officers high in command. They expect nothing now from heaven taught and book taught generals. I hope in our next promotions, we shall disregard seniority. Stevens must be made a major general, he has genius as well as knowledge. Mercer must not be neglected, he has the confidence of the troops. Adieu.

Your's,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
Member of Congress.

P. S. Congress must take up the affairs of our money *wholly*. It is a national concern; legislatures are too distant, too languid, and, in many states, too incompletely formed, for that purpose.

CROSSIDES, December 30, 1776.

MY DEAR SIR—There is no toil so dear to a soldier as that which is marked with the footsteps of a flying enemy; every thing looks well. Our army increases daily, and our

troops are impatient to avenge the injuries done to the state of New Jersey; the tories fly with the precipitation of guilty fear, to General Howe. A detachment from our body yesterday, took four of them, and killed one; two of the former, were officers of Howe's new militia establishment. We suffer much for the want of intelligence, which can only be procured by money that will pass in both camps. Howe owes the superiority and regularity of his intelligence above ours, not so much to the voluntary information of the tories, as to the influence of his gold. Pray send two or three thousand pounds, in hard money, immediately, to General Washington; it will do you more service than twenty new regiments. Let not this matter be debated and postponed in the usual way, for two or three weeks; the salvation of America, under God, depends upon its being done in an *instant*. I beg leave, for a moment, to call off your attention from the affairs of the public, to inform you, that I have heard, from good authority, that my much honoured father-in-law, who is now a prisoner with General Howe, suffers many indignities and hardships from the enemy, from which not only his rank, but his being a man, ought to exempt him. I wish you would propose to Congress to pass a resolution in his favour, similar to that they have passed in favour of General Lee; they owe it to their own honour, as well as to a member of their body. I did not want this intelligence to rouse my resentment against the enemy; but it has increased it; every particle of my blood is electrified with revenge; and if justice cannot be done to him in any other way, I declare I will, in defiance of the authority of the Congress, and the power of the army, drive the first rascally tory I meet with, a hundred miles, barefooted, through the first deep snow that falls in our country. Two small brigades of New England troops have consented to serve a month after the time of their enlistments expire; there is reason to believe, all the New England troops, in their predicament, will follow their example. We have just learned, that the enemy are preparing to retreat from Princeton. Adieu. General Washington must be invested with dictatorial power for a few months, or we are undone. The *vis inertiæ* of the Congress has almost ruined this country.

Yours,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

BORDENTOWN, January 6th, 1776.

DEAR SIR—Before this reaches you, you will, I dare say, have heard of the affairs of Trenton and Princeton. At the former place, victory was undecided; at the latter, it was complete. Too much praise cannot be given to our brave troops for the patience with which they have undergone cold, hunger, and all the usual distresses of a winter's campaign; the Philadelphia militia behaved like heroes; at Princeton, like young troops, they broke at first, but, like veterans, were rallied without much difficulty. Much credit is due to a brigade of New England men, commanded by Colonel Hitchcock, in both actions; they sustained a heavy fire, from musketry and artillery, for a long time, without moving; they are entitled to a great share of the honour acquired by our arms at Princeton. General Mercer's death cannot be too much lamented. I had the pleasure of dining with him two days before he fell, and was never more highly feasted with patriotic sentiments; his character was marked with all the traits of one of the heroes of antiquity; the manner of his death was equally honourable to himself and to our cause. I cannot help thinking but that the Congress owe some funeral honours to his memory; perhaps an oration would have a better effect in this case than in that of General ———. What do you think of the Congress writing a letter of condolence to the widow?

I congratulate you upon the addition of Colonel Knox to the list of general officers; he is a brave, sensible, enterprising man. I saw his behaviour in the battle of Trenton; he was cool, cheerful, and was present every where. I have picked up an original letter from General Howe to Count de Donop, at Trenton, a copy of which I shall send you, to be laid before Congress; it contains, among other things, a warrant for plundering the inhabitants of New Jersey; it must be published.

Yours, &c.

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

PRINCETON, January 7th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—I write to you, at the request of General Mercer, to beg that you would immediately despatch an express to Mrs. Mercer, to inform her that the General is con-

siderably better, and there are reasonable hopes of his recovery. I have attended him since yesterday, and shall not leave him till he is out of danger; he is wounded in seven places, with a bayonet; one of these wounds is in his forehead, but the most alarming of them are in his belly; he is in good spirits, drinks plentifully, sleeps tolerably well, and talks cheerfully on all subjects, as usual; from the unfortunate circumstance of his wanting a surgeon at the time he fell, he was obliged to give his parole, in order to procure a surgeon from the enemy, and he is now their prisoner. The loss of the enemy in the battle at Princeton, from the best accounts, amounts to fifty killed, and one hundred and fifty wounded; among the former is a Captain Leslie, a nephew to General Leslie, and the second son of the Earl of Leven. I knew him intimately in Scotland; he was an accomplished officer and gentleman. I wept, for the first time, for a victory gained over British troops; our attachment to each other was reciprocal; for when I was introduced to a Captain M'Pherson, who now lies in this town, in order to dress his wounds, he asked if I was the Doctor Rush who used to correspond with Captain Leslie. I told him I was. He told me he had heard his friend Leslie say, a thousand times, that he forgot in me the political enemy in the personal friend. General Washington buried him with all the honours of war. Our loss at Princeton, amounted to about twenty-five killed, and about forty wounded; among the former were Colonel Haslet, (a gallant officer,) Major Fleming, Captains Neal and Shippen, and Lieutenant Morgan, of Philadelphia. Princeton is, indeed, a deserted village; you would think it had been desolated with the plague and an earthquake, as well as with the calamities of war; the college and church are heaps of ruin; all the inhabitants have been plundered; the whole of Mr. Stockton's furniture, apparel, and even valuable writings, have been burnt; all his cattle, horses, and hogs, sheep, grain, and forage, have been carried away by them; his losses cannot amount to less than five thousand pounds. The enemy, in their pursuit of General Washington through the Jersey's, called his troops the *rebel army;* in their retreat before him, they called his troops the *provincials,* and sometimes the continental army. Major General Grant commanded at Trenton and Princeton, last week, under Lord Cornwallis. When Colonel Roll, who was killed at the surprise of Trenton, on the 26th of last month, wrote to him for more troops, to enable him to hold his posts on the Delaware, he laughed at his application, and sent him word that

he "could keep the whole Jersies with a corporal and four men?" Enclosed is the copy of the form of a protection in English and German. Hundreds have been plundered who have accepted of them.

Yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

Colonel Lee.

PHILADELPHIA, January 14th, 1777.

Dear sir—I left our good friend, General Mercer, on Saturday last *out of danger*, but so exceedingly weak, from the loss of blood, that he cannot be moved with safety these ten days. The commanding officer at Brunswick has given him liberty to go or ride where he pleases. Lieutenant Yeates, of Colonel Reed's Virginia regiment, died on Friday last at Princeton. The circumstances of his death merit the attention of the Congress. In the beginning of the action, on the 3d of this instant, he received a wound in his side, which brought him to the ground. Upon seeing the enemy advance towards him, he begged for quarters. A British soldier stopped; and, after deliberately loading his musket by his side, shot him through the breast; finding that he was still alive, he stabbed him in thirteen places with his bayonet, the poor youth all the while crying for mercy. Upon the enemy being forced to retreat, either the same, or another soldier, finding that he was not dead, struck him with the club of a musket on the side of the head. He languished a week in the greatest anguish, and then died (I declare it upon my honour, as a man and a physician,) of the wounds he received, after he fell and begged for quarters. The savages murdered a clergyman, a chaplain to a battalion of militia, in cool blood, at Trenton, after he had surrendered himself, and begged for mercy. His name was Rosborough. When we complain to the British officers of the hard fare of our prisoners in New York, they ask, why do not the Congress appoint a commissary, and send provisions to them? The enemy have done something like the first of these things for the Hessian prisoners now in this state. I wish the attention of Congress could be roused in behalf of our poor fellows; they are confined in churches, without fire-wood. Twenty have been thrown out in a day, to putrify in the streets. It is a prostitution of language and truth to attribute a fibre of humanity to General Howe's heart; his natural disposition, as well as the nature of the service he is engaged in, have rendered him a mere Jeffries for every species of political

iniquity. I write from good information, having picked up a number of anecdotes which justify the picture I have given of him. I saw an intelligent gentleman, who left New York about ten days ago, who whispered in my ears, that an account had just reached New York, that the court of Britain had engaged 12,000 Russians and 8,000 Germans for the next campaign. He said, the affair of Trenton operated like a clap of thunder at New York. Some cursed the Hessian commander at Trenton; while the most intelligent blamed General Howe for making *his line so long*, as they called it. It produced a revolution in their countenances, manners, conversation, and even their toasts: "A speedy accommodation of the present unnatural dispute," being given at the table of the principal officers. Lord Cornwallis was to have sailed for England the day the news reached New York, but was detained in order to take the command in New Jersey. I hope to join you in Congress in a few days. I forgot to mention before, that I left our army not only in high spirits, but in *good health*. The medical department must undergo a revolution. Compliments to your worthy brother. Yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

PHILADELPHIA, January 14th, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Since my letter of this morning, I have heard of the removal of Dr. Morgan and Dr. Stringer from the medical department. I beg you would suspend the filling up their places, till I have the pleasure of seeing you. I have taken some pains to acquire from a surgeon in General Howe's army, a perfect knowledge of the methods of taking care of the sick in the British military hospitals. I can, moreover, point out to you several worthy characters, who should immediately be placed on the medical staff in our army. Dr. Cochrane, of Brunswick, is one of them; he possesses humanity as well as skill, and is dear to all who know him. I have found, from conversing with the surgeons of the British army, as well as from my own observations, that the care of the sick is a matter that engages the attention of even their general officers. Lord Cornwallis, in retreating through Princeton, left five privates and one surgeon to attend the wounded men he was forced to leave behind him. I am sorry to say nothing of this kind was done by our generals, although a General Mercer was numbered in the list of our

wounded. Every captain in the British army is obliged to visit the sick of his company at least once a day, to see that they want for nothing. Considering that sickness sweeps off more men than the sword in all armies, I cannot help thinking, that it is as much the duty of a good officer to save his men by tenderness in the one case, as it is by . . . . in the other. From yours, sincerely,

BENJAMIN RUSH.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

BETHLEHEM, Tuesday, December 17th, 1776.

DEAR SIR—After much difficulty and expense, I have removed all the sick to Easton, Bethlehem, and Allentown. their number is now much reduced, and all in a good way. I send twenty or thirty weekly to join the army. There is no paymaster or general near us, and I am almost out of cash; I must, therefore, beg the favour of you to procure me five thousand dollars, and send them by the bearer, Dr. Halling, for the use of the hospitals. You will please to give a receipt for me, &c. Mrs. Shippen and the children arrived safe on Thursday morning, and are happily settled in this peaceful town. I have not heard of my clothes and old wine: fear the varlets have them as secure as poor General Lee. Oh! what a damned sneaking way of being kidnapped—I can't bear to think of it. I saw all his troops, about four thousand, this morning, marching from Easton, about two day's march from Washington, in good spirits, and much pleased with their General Sullivan. General Gates, with nine hundred men, marches from this place this afternoon and to-morrow. We hear General Heath is within four days march with three thousand men. God send that all joined may save Philadelphia, and disappoint the cursed tories this winter. Where are your good ladies? my love and best compliments to them, and desire they will take care of themselves, lest our retrograde soldiers will run them down. I wish you would introduce a new step into your army. I am sure they are perfect in the back step by this time.

Compliments to the Adams's, &c. &c.

I am, yours,
Very affectionately,
W. SHIPPEN, Jun.

Colonel LEE, of the Honourable Continental Congress,
Philadelphia.

From a tedious experience, I have learned what is necessary in a military hospital, and think it my duty, to give my opinion thereon to my friends in Congress. I have attended to this matter more carefully, because I saw on my first entering the army, that many more brave Americans fell a sacrifice to neglect and iniquity in the medical department than fell by the sword of the enemy. I saw directors but no direction, physicians and surgeons, but too much about their business, and the care of the sick committed to young boys, in the character of mates, quite ignorant, and, as I am informed, hired at half price, &c. &c. &c.; some I found honestly doing the duty of their stations. How far my own department has been better filled, does not become me to say, and I am not ashamed to own, that I am conscious of many imperfections, but flatter myself, none of them have arisen from want of care and integrity in the director, or skill and industry, in his physicians, surgeons and mates; all the latter, he can with pleasure declare, have done more than their duty cheerfully. Some have arisen from my inexperience, some from the scarcity of many articles necessary for the sick, and more from the distracted, flying state of our army. All these causes, I persuade myself, will in a great measure be removed in the next campaign, if our cruel enemies risk another. I would humbly propose the following arrangement as necessary, and I hope adequate to making the sick soldiery comfortable and happy: suppose three armies, a *northern*, *middle*, and *southern*, to each of these the following officers—

1 director and surgeon general,	at	35*s*	0*d*	and 8	rations.
3 sub or assistant directors,		22	6	and 6	do.
10 surgeons or physicians,		20	0	and 4	do.
20 mates		7	6	and 2	do.
1 apothecary general,		20	0	and 4	do.
4 mates,		7	6	and 2	do.
1 to act as quartermaster and commissary general,		12	6	and 4	do.
3 deputies, or one to every hundred sick,		7	6	and 2	do.
1 steward to every hundred sick,		5	0	and 2	do.
1 matron to do.		3	9	and 2	do.
1 ward master to do.		5	0	and 1	do.
1 nurse to every 15 sick, instead of one to every ten, at		10	0	per week,	

7*s* 6*d*; they are not to be had at 7*s* 6*d*.

1 to act as secretary, and store-keeper to every hospital, - 7*s* 6*d* and 2 rations.

The directors general and sub-directors to be chosen by the Congress; the physicians, surgeons and apothecaries, by the directors.

The mates, by the physicians and surgeons, after a strict examination. All other officers, by the directors. Not less than this, in my opinion, will induce men properly qualified to engage; and any others, will be dear at any price.

I have the honour to be,
dear sir,
Your very humble servant,
WILLIAM SHIPPEN, Jun.

No regimental hospitals will be now necessary. To every regiment, should be appointed by the Congress, after being examined and recommended by the directors, and physicians, and surgeons of the hospital, or by three or four, of the most eminent in any state, appointed by that state for the purpose,

1 surgeon, - at 12*s* 6*d* and 4 rations, per diem.
and 2 mates, - 6*s* 3*d* and 2 do.

To be supplied with one case of amputating and trepanning instruments, one case of pocket ditto, and such a chest of medicines, as the directors shall think proper.

Bethlehem, 20th December, 1776.

PHILADELPHIA, 17th January, 1777.

My dear Sir—The sick soldiery are suffering for want of some new arrangement; I am pleased, that you have adopted mine so far as to dismiss the two directors, it gives general joy to the army. We want assistant directors, the army and sick are so scattered; and the pay of our physicians and surgeons must be augmented to 20*s*. or three dollars, or no men of education will engage; these things must be done immediately. There will some difficulties arise, if the sub-directors and surgeons are not equal in their pay, because those who stand first on the list for promotion, are not the fittest for directors. Suppose sub-directors and surgeons are

allowed 20*s*., and there were assistant surgeons at 15*s*., and mates at 7*s*. and 6*d*. You cannot conceive the disorder I found the sick in here, every body directing, and every body bringing in accounts. I am now busily engaged in reducing them to a little regularity, which I hope I shall effect in four or five days; in the mean time, I am much wanted in the army, and at my other hospitals. Don't forget Doctor Cochran as one of my assistant directors. Can't Doctor Jones be enlisted for the northern department, and Foster, Warren, &c., his assistants?

Would it not answer good purposes, and save the Congress much trouble, if I was called inspector general of the whole and director of the middle department? I should then have a right to look into the conduct of all the hospitals and receive returns from them, and order what proportion of medicines should go to each, &c. I write any thing and every thing to you, knowing your friendship and as I flatter myself you think, I will exert my honest endeavours to serve this great cause. It would be a great thing if we could have six weeks peace now, that our soldiers might be inoculated; many of them have the small-pox, and I fear all the brave Virginians will take it. How do you all do? God bless you, and believe me sincerely,

Your affectionate,

WILLIAM SHIPPEN, Jun.

Richard Henry Lee, Esq.

P. S. The New York battalions are all complete. Two thousand have marched from this place within three days. We shall do for them.

My dear Brothers—I enclose a letter written to any body you think proper, containing my idea of a military hospital, as frugal as I think consistent with the good comfort of the sick soldiery. The abuses, the neglect and fraud, in M. . n's department, has been of more disservice to the new army, than any other circumstance I know of—(not paying the men is another sad thing, very few have received any pay for four months.) The New Englandmen say they will not serve if M. . n is director. The following are facts that can be proved, but I should not choose to be called on:

1. He appointed his own apprentice, who had not been with him three months, apothecary general, at fifty dollars a

month; pocketed the whole, and charged the youth for his board.

2. He has eight or ten mates at 3*s*. 9*d*. a day, and charges the continent 7*s*. 6*d*.; they are quite ignorant.

3. From fifty to one hundred sick, are entirely trusted to these boys.

4. There always have been a great abundance of stores locked up, and with great expense removed from place to place, greater than the first cost, and the sick perish for want of them. Hundreds in Hackinsack, lying on straw, in cold barns, with nothing but beef and bread to eat.

5. He makes money of the tallow, by making candles and selling them to the hospital, therefore nothing but beef given them: this I have from his quarter master, who was to have part of the profit; and I am told, he pockets all the retained rations, but this I cannot prove, nor should I choose to be called upon to prove any thing. I have my information from the united voice of his own officers. Methinks I hear you say, yet this is the man you would have chosen—but, good God! did you or I believe he could be so damned a rogue! General Gates, who has spent two days with us here, gives as bad a character of Dr. Stringer, the northern director. If you think proper to show the enclosed to Congress, do it; if to particular members, do it; any how, let Messrs. Adams, Gerry, Rush, Morris, &c. see it. I know I shall have your and their interest for my proper place, and when you find me tripping, turn me out.

General Howe is now stopped, and I believe, for the winter. Washington is strong, being reinforced by Sullivan and Gates, with four thousand brave northern troops, who passed through this place two days ago. There is a certain account of twelve thousand men coming from Massachusetts—the extremes must save us. Where are the Virginia light horse, &c.? Our troops begin to recollect themselves and again think of bush fighting; they scout and skirmish every day with success, and begin to grow bold. The New York men have raised their complement for the army, and intend doing more.

I am desired by some of the northern members of Congress, to recommend to your interest, Doctors Foster and Warren, these are strong arguments, and I believe they are clever in the profession; they are the two first on . . . . . list; I am only afraid they have lived too long in the sphere of this action. Dr. Foster did direct before, and I am well informed, the hospital was in good order; suppose he was made director of the northern army, and his sub-directors were

Warren, M'Knight, and Potts, who are much thought of in the army, unless you make Dr. Jones of New York, director, and those three sub-directors, then the department will be complete. For the middle, I should like to continue if 'tis agreeable to Congress, and have for my sub-directors, Doctors Brown, Kuhn and Cochran. All the directors should be directed by Congress, to visit the hospital every two or three days; the southern department you know better than I do.

My dear Sir—General Greene is appointed to take the command of the southern army, and wishes to have your countenance and friendship. He is a little suspicious that you are not perfectly satisfied with his conduct, because you were said to be inimical to our commander, and of consequence to him, who was supposed to be one of his flatterers—this false idea I have reprobated, to General Greene, and assured him he would find you his friend and useful confidant. He is pleased with the idea, having a good and great idea of your integrity and ability; and I am pleased with an opportunity of assuring you the general is the fittest man in our army to retrieve our affairs in your country; he is a cool, brave, prudent, and thoughtful general, a staunch whig, and inflexible patriot, and, what I am sure will recommend him to you, he is my friend. I congratulate you on the success of our arms, against Major Ferguson, &c. and this will certainly give our southern friends *fresh* spirits, and who knows but it will be as fruitful *in its* consequences as the affair at Bennington. I give you joy also on the safe arrival of your two fine boys, and your brother Arthur. I left them all well, at my house, on Sunday last. The Congress seemed determined to give Mr. Lee all the trouble and vexation they can, influenced by that ..... The arrangement of the hospital department, is beyond conception, mean, unjust, and contemptible; and none of the officers, will, I believe, act under it. With difficulty, I am again elected director, such influence has Morgan's malicious insinuations had on the minds of six states, notwithstanding the acquittal by the court martial and Congress; however, I am now at liberty to continue or resign, and believe shall choose the latter, unless some very material alterations take place. Two or three thousand men have sailed from New York, for Cape Fear, or Virginia, it is supposed. Our campaign is near over, and nothing like to be done. Our situation is now alarming, and unless something deci-

sive and spirited is done, God help us. With sincere wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, my dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and humble servant,
W. SHIPPEN, Jr.

Camp Peakness, Oct. 27, 1780.

READING, November 5, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Mr. Nourse enclosed to me, by order of the board of war, a copy of a charge, made to the board, by the president and council of this state, against the quartermaster general's department; in which charge, Mr. John Biddle, and Mr. Robert L. Hooper, are particularly mentioned as offenders. Agreeable to the orders of the board, I have called upon Colonel Hooper to justify his conduct as a deputy quartermaster general. The colonel will wait on the board for that purpose. From much experience, I declare, that Colonel Hooper is a most excellent officer, and to him, we are principally indebted for the removal and security of the stores from Philadelphia, and for the happy supplies of forage and teams, during the three last months of the campaign. Major Ayers, who was sent by General Washington to remove the public stores from Trenton, and Mr. Butler, who had the principal direction of the stores from Philadelphia to Trenton and Bristol, will give him reputable certificates of his activity in the service. Mr. John Biddle, who acted some weeks as an assistant commissary of forage, with much industry, and great utility to the public, resigned the office about three weeks past, being tired out with the clamours of his enemies.

I believe the most honourable president and council do not suspect me of disaffection to our most righteous cause. If they hold any suspicions of that kind, the scene has changed most wonderfully, as I perfectly recognize many of their special friends, in times of difficulty and danger, as disaffected, most pusillanimous scoundrels; whom no inducements, private or public, could call forth in defence of their country—I mean before the game was palpably our own, and the storm well nigh past and over. Forgive this apparent heat; I know *the men* well, and believe the complaint against my department is grounded solely on a suspected detestation, in some of my assistants, of *their* government, and their go-

verning abilities. I shall be happy to know the determination of Congress relative to my letters of resignation, to which I beg leave to adhere.

I am, dear Sir, with much respect and affection,
Your obedient servant,

J. MIFFLIN.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
in Congress, at Yorktown.

READING, 12th November, 1777.

Dear Sir—I return a thousand affectionate thanks for your kind attention to me, and in particular for your last proposition, which has given me an opportunity of proving my zeal for my country's welfare, to be as ardent as ever. It became impossible for me to act in my former line, and I would have served as a gallopen to any general officer rather than continue in a command which I could not execute in a way honourable to myself, or useful to the public. The salary annexed to my new appointment is ample; I do not want pay; I wish only to lend a hand to save my country. I have thought much of the paltry figure this state makes in the present hour, and think it is not too late to recover her usual activity, and to make her as useful to the general cause as she was last year. If Congress will but assist in calling forth the militia of this state as volunteers, and not under the law by distinct classes, much may be done. I have reason to believe, six thousand men might be induced to step forth for a coup de main in the same manner, and with the same success, with our brave and virtuous brethren of New England; there is but one obstacle. This scheme is offensive to the president and council of Pennsylvania, and will, probably, be discouraged by them, as it may be injurious to their plans of government. I would have proposed and undertaken it long ago, but was unwilling to give those gentlemen any cause of complaint. If it is begun in Congress, it will probably take effect, and I will say and do all I can to bring out my countrymen; and when out, I will take any command with them, even that of a sergeant or corporal. When Congress have made their arrangement of quartermaster general, so that I can leave this town, without injury to the service, I will wait on them for their orders.

I am, affectionately,

J. MIFFLIN.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
in Congress, at Yorktown.

PHILADELPHIA, April 15, 1780.

SIR—I am to acknowledge and thank you for your obliging favour of the 17th February, enclosing Mr. Lee's vindication, which has been published in our newspapers. To some collateral parts, there have been replies by Mr. Conyngham, and Mr. Joseph Wharton. The multitude and enormity of public abuses one would have thought should have excited general attention and alarm; but attempts to detect and prevent them have generally been retorted in such a manner, as almost to sanctify unfaithfulness and dishonesty. I cannot help considering it as one of the most unfavourable symptoms, that, while we are all complaining against abuses, as soon as the offender is selected, he finds friends and advocates even in the most respectable assemblies.

In the affairs of Mr. Deane, I fear we shall long feel the sad effects of procrastination and indecision. After the publication of the 5th December, America had a just claim upon that gentleman to prove his allegations, or take the shame which would have been his portion. It has been determined otherwise, and it is very probable we shall never know from public authority, whether Mr. Deane was a faithful servant to his country, or a defrauder and base calumniator. At this rate, innocence is no shield, nor honesty a . . . . . and I shall esteem him a bold man who will venture abroad, in a public character, under the auspices of Congress. Permit me now, sir, before I conclude, to turn your attention to the unhappy state of affairs between Pennsylvania and Virginia. We had flattered ourselves that our disputes of territory were happily adjusted, and mutual friendship and affection would have taken place of that distrust and jealousy which had long prevailed. But the measure of sending commissioners to sell and confirm the very lands ceded to Pennsylvania by the settlement of the line, and the contempt shown to Congress, as well as this state, have, I fear, made such impressions as will not easily be erased. When nations and states can adopt such pitiful and disingenuous policy, it becomes common cause to unite against them, and you well know the jealousy entertained of Virginia, forms an easy ground for this purpose. The advantage, also, taken of our vicinity to the common enemy, against whom our whole force is collected and pointed, must appear, to every generous mind, so irreconcilable to the common principles of gratitude and justice, that it cannot be supposed the present measures originate from the same spirits or counsels, which created and conducted this great contest with Britain. You may be

assured that Pennsylvania will resent it the moment she has her arms at liberty, and then Virginia will blush that she has verified the predictions of our enemies. A few designing and interested men, in the back country, are certainly practising upon their more honest and . . . . . or corruption has pervaded your councils in a greater degree than could have been supposed from the infancy of your government. Your influence may do much to retrieve this unhappy business, and never can be employed to a better purpose.

The ladies of my family thank you for your very polite attention, and join me in wishing your lady, family, and self, every possible happiness.

I am, Sir, with much esteem,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

JOSEPH REED.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire.

PHILADELPHIA, March 25th, 1780.

DEAR SIR—Your much esteemed favour, of the 15th of last month, with the extracts from your much injured brother's letter, to the President of Congress, and the copy of Doctor Berkenhout's letter to yourself, enclosed, came safe to hand. Next to the approbation of my own conscience, it has always been my wish to obtain that of the wise and good, and I confess I am happy in having yours. I flatter myself the time will shortly come, when the honest labourers in the cause of freedom and their country, will at least meet with the reward of being known; and when, also, the double dealing, artful pretenders will be discovered.

There has been a virtuous band in Congress from the beginning of the present contest, but they were never so few, or so much opposed, as just after you and your good brother left us. In the winter and spring of 1779, there was a cabal, whose views I could not fathom; there were some possessed of restless spirits, and who endeavoused to set member against member, and the Congress against the states, particularly Pennsylvania and those of New England, and and the states against Congress. Every artifice was used to instil prejudice, against all our foreign ministers and commissioners, particularly your *brothers*, (Dr. Arthur Lee and William Lee,) and I really believe, if I had not in April last, gone off the bench into Congress, in the face of a vote of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, that they would have been recalled without exception. My fears were, that at that criti-

cal period, when it had been propagated in Europe, and some uneasiness discovered on that score by the court of France, that we were listening to overtures from Great Britain, a change of men might have implied, a change of measures, and given some countenance to the report; and for this reason I thought it wrong to recall any gentleman in such a conjuncture. The vote was taken with respect to Dr. Franklin, and being determined in the negative, it was postponed as to the rest, until I was absent on the circuit. Places I saw were sought after by some, and vacancies were necessary for the purpose of obtaining them, but I could not think this was the only thing in contemplation; though I may have been mistaken, as harmony seemed to be restored in some measure, upon the appointment of Messers Jay and Carmichel. The death of Mr. Drayton, and the considerable change about that time of the members, several of them not having been re-elected, left us pretty quiet ever since, though prejudices still too much prevail. When I reflect on the assiduity, the zeal, the fidelity, the abilities and patriotism of Dr. A. Lee, I cannot help deploring his fate, and reprobating the ingratitude of Congress; but sir, it is with pleasure that I can assure you, that he has many unshaken friends still remaining in that body, who have never seen him, and who esteem him only for his public virtues. I profess myself one of these, and he has at least, my warmest thanks for his substantial services rendered to my country. I cannot think it any reflection on a gentleman's heart, that he has been mistaken in entertaining too good an opinion of another, nor am I at all surprised that even you, should have been led into an error with respect to Doctor Berkenhout, after perusing his letter, and knowing his insinuating address; but I shall say no more on this head, as I am really apologizing for myself. The deranged state of our finances has given us infinite trouble and concern; a new plan has been adopted which is published in the newspapers, to which I shall refer you. If it can be carried into execution it will be a great relief to us, and I see nothing else left, but for every whig to exert himself in its support. There is no great prospect of peace, though the late intelligence from Europe is otherwise favourable, I suspect that Mr. Temple, (who came over in 1778 with Doctor Berkenhout,) will shortly venture here again, with propositions, (perhaps secret,) to acknowledge the independence of the states, except South Carolina and Georgia, and that part of Massachusetts, formerly called the province of Maine, on conditions of our neutrality between Britain and Spain; he is to have power to call on two merchants in London, of his own

nomination, *ad libitum*. This is not mere conjecture or report; but it may not be attempted to be carried into execution, as I think upon the best reflection he must despair of success. Can they suppose that these states will be so perfidious to one another, or to the auxiliary of their ally, that they are so corrupt, so base? Can they be taught to believe, that a virtuous people can grow so extremely wicked, by a war of five years continuance? Nemo repente fit turpissimus.

I am, my dear sir, with the most perfect esteem, your most obedient humble servant.

THOMAS M'KEAN.

PHILADELPHIA, September 4th, 1781.

SIR—I had the pleasure of receiving your favour, of the 26th of last month, yesterday, and am very sorry for the distresses of Virginia, though the ardour and unanimity of the people promise, that they will not long continue. Long ere this I had flattered myself, that I should have heard of the Count de Grasse and Count de Barras, having entered the Chesapeake, with thirty four ships of the line, and several frigates, bomb ketches and other armed vessels. They sailed for that bay long ago, with a considerable body of land forces, and a company of sappers and miners, having every apparatus on board for attacking fortifications. This you may depend upon. General Washington, with the whole French army and a large detachment of Americans, are in full march for your relief; the last division passes through this city to day. Colonel Laurens, came to town yesterday from Boston, where he arrived, in the French frigate Resolution, accompanied with two others loaded with arms, ammunition and clothing, on the 25th of August; besides these important supplies, all for the United States, he has brought with him a large sum in specie, almost equal to our wishes. The court of France have really exerted themselves, far beyond any thing done heretofore, and have given full proof, how much they have our independence at heart. In a few weeks more, I trust I shall have it in my power to mention, additional evidences of their most faithful attachment. The king has written a very friendly letter to Congress, and presented their special minister Colonel Laurens, with an elegant gold box, having his picture in the lid, ornamented with diamonds, &c. nearly resembling one, you had the honour of receiving. On Saturday last, about one oclock P. M., Sir Samuel Hood,

with twenty-two ships of the line, was seen about twenty-five miles southward of Shrewsbury, steering to the southward; I suppose for Chesapeake. In all probability we shall soon hear of a sea engagement; we are at the eve of great events; may God grant them to be prosperous to us, and that they may terminate in securing to us, peace, liberty and safety.

I have the honour to be, sir, with the most respectful personal attachment,

Your most obedient humble servant.

THOMAS M'KEAN.

The Hon. ARTHUR LEE.

MARYLAND CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, July 30th, 1776.

MY DEAR SIR—Your letter of the 14th instant followed me to this city; and your other favour of the 21st, was delivered by yesterday's post. I hurried to Congress to give my little assistance to the framing a confederacy and a plan for a foreign alliance; both of them subjects of the utmost importance, and which, in my judgment, demand immediate despatch. The confederacy has engaged our close attention for a week. Three great difficulties occur; representation, the mode of voting, and the claims to the south sea. The whole might, in my opinion, be settled, if candour, justice, and the real interests of America, were attended to. We do not all see the importance, nay, the necessity, of a confederacy. We shall remain weak, distracted, and divided in our councils; our strength will decrease; we shall be open to all the arts of the insidious court of Britain, and no foreign court will attend to our applications for assistance, before we are confederated. What contract will a foreign state make with us, when we cannot agree among ourselves? Our army at Ticonderoga, consists of six thousand men, of which three thousand are in the hospital, from the small-pox and other camp disorders. Our army at New York contains fourteen thousand, of which only ten thousand are effective. Our flying camp in the Jerseys, has but between three and four thousand troops. No news from General Washington. He writes, 27th, that eight sail, supposed to be part of Lord Howe's fleet, arrived at the Hook that day. I shall always be glad to hear from you, and am, with great esteem,

Your affectionate friend,

And obedient servant,

SAMUEL CHASE.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.

Extract of a letter from

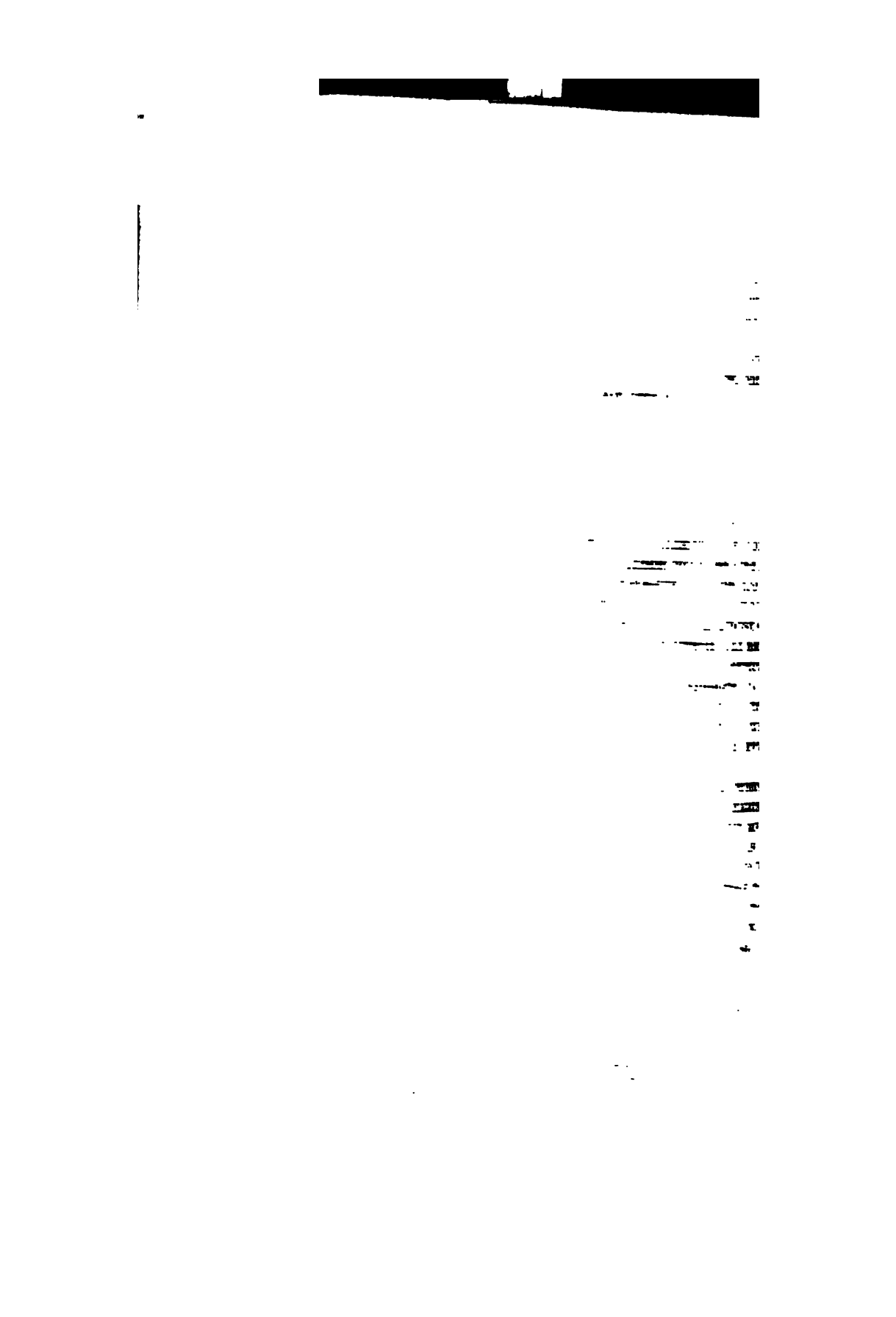
PHILADELPHIA, July 1st, 11 o'clock, A. M.

The enclosed copy of General Washington's letter of the 28th, will inform you of the transactions in the Jerseys, since my last to you. We do not exactly know the enemy's strength in the Jerseys. They have called in all their outposts, and have left but weak garrisons in New York and Long Island. I apprehend Howe may have in all about fifteen thousand; but these will moulder away by daily skirmishes, desertion, and fatigue, unless he can force our general to a battle, and should come off conqueror. I fear the loss of our three field pieces was owing to surprise. Was it not shameful to be surprised, when the enemy were within eight miles? Nothing but severity will introduce discipline into our armies; and dear bought experience only can convince our officers and men of its utility, nay, of its absolute necessity. Mr. Duet, a delegate from New York, informs me, that an intelligent person who arrived yesterday in town from Poalskill, acquainted him, that the obstructions in the Highlands are in great forwardness; and that the enemy, should they attempt that passage, will meet with a most vigorous resistance. I wish our situation at Ticonderoga may be as respectable. I expect great matters from the influence, conduct, and activity of Schuyler, and from the military knowledge of St. Clair, who commands at that post. Four French engineers arrived here last week, engaged by our agents in France, by the direction of Congress. They refuse to serve under De Coudray. The terms on which these gentlemen engaged, are modest and moderate; a lieutenant colonel in the French service is to be a colonel in our's, a major a lieutenant colonel, and a lieutenant a captain.

Extract of a letter from

PHILADELPHIA, half after 12 o'clock, July 1st, 1777.

By a letter from General Washington, dated the 29th, and just now received in Congress, we are informed that the



BALTIMORE, July 2d, 1789.

MY DEAR SIR—As the time approaches for the appointment to office, the anxiety of the applicants increases. Mr. Harness is alarmed from the number of applicants; and he is told that the president will only nominate *one* person to each office. The choice of the Senate will be great, and useful to the public if this mode be pursued! They will have a *negative*, if the president should again nominate the same person, and persist; the office must be vacant, or his nomination accepted. I remember it was held a maxim in British politics, that all acts of bounty should flow from the king alone—all refusals from his ministers. I hope this information is not true.

I sometimes see debates in the lower house of Parliament, but none in the *Senate*. I hear their doors are locked; if true, I am sorry for it. I retain my republican principles, although our government, and the principles of the people, are changed, and are monarchical. I approve of the amendments of the Senate to the impost bill: the duties are yet too high, and experience will prove it. I think the subject of the bill ought to have been divided: duties for *revenue;* duties for the regulation of trade; and duties to encourage manufactures, if you have any power by the constitution to impose taxes or duties for these purposes. I perceive by the bill for the establishment of the judicial courts, that the jury trial is secured. If the jury trial depends on a *law*, I suppose it may be modified, or *taken away* by another *law*. I think the bill is ably drawn. I think there are some defects. The circuit courts ought not to have jurisdiction of cases under eight hundred dollars. The district court ought to have jurisdiction of juries to amount of eight hundred dollars. The *same* persons ought, on no account, to be judges of law and *equity*. The restriction on the jurisdiction of the courts of equity will render the court useless in a thousand instances, in which it ought to have jurisdiction. It is difficult to define its jurisdiction, but the limitation will do great injury. I have written my idea of a proper clause, pointing out in what cases the equity courts shall have jurisdiction, to Mr. Housy. I consider the district court as the most useful and important; the superior court as the most honourable and profitable. If it is intended to give the district judge jurisdiction of . . . . in time of war, his office will be very important, and will require considerable abilities, as well as great integrity. I say if *intended*, because it is omitted. Whatever I scribble

now, or at any time, is only for your private observation. If I notice any thing to you, it is without the least intention of giving offence to any one. If my opinion could prevail, I would . . . . allowance to the . . . . . I have not heard one person approve. It is flinging the government into the hands of the wealthy or adventurous. Adieu, my dear sir; accept my best wishes for your health and prosperity; think of my friend Harness, and believe me to be, at all times,

Your affectionate friend,

And obedient servant,

SAMUEL CHASE.

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR SIR—In return for your kindness in sending the two Maryland acts, imposing taxes by assessment, I am sorry that I cannot furnish you with an authentic copy of the charter granted by King James. The papers belonging to the House of Delegates, among which that grant is, were long since sent to Richmond; and I do not believe the person in whose care they are, can readily find it. Before you reached Philadelphia, or soon afterwards, you probably heard of the arrival of a British fleet in the Chesapeake. Whilst it was in suspense, whether their destination was for Virginia, government was making some preparations for its defence; if they had made a descent here, how inadequate the forces that could have been drawn together would have been, I need not explain to you. They however soon disappeared. It is supposed that they are bound to the head of the bay; and that the troops on board will march towards Philadelphia: if they should take that route, and General Washington had left the city, as we are informed he did the 10th instant, some of us fear it may be attended with bad effects, unless he can return time enough to obstruct the progress of the enemy. Several of the Gloucester men from the lower part of the county, even of those who were assembled upon this occasion, refused to take the oath of fidelity: Mr. Camen and our countryman Mr. Hubard, of this city, declined it, alleging that they desired time to consider of it: I have heard too, that many in another county, are very scrupulous on this head. It is pity we cannot act with more unanimity and more vigour: nothing else seems wanting to conclude this contest happily and speedily; an event which I despair not of, nor would despair of, if all the tories, ... patriots, and trimming neuters were at Howe's head-quarters. It appears to me, whatever may be achieved by the enemy, or however they may be disappointed in this expedition, that the earliest intelligence of their operations ought to be dispersed. No doubt our delegates, in their ordinary correspondence with government, will be

as communicative as can be reasonably wished, yet particular information from you, sir, will be esteemed a favour. Present my compliments, if you please, to your brother, and believe me to be your friend,

GEORGE WYTHE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 24th August, 1777.

Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 18th October, ——.

Well I know, sir, how much of your time is taken up in the important duties of your station, nor do I wish to interrupt you, even so long, as it would require, to answer a letter from me, unless you think you cannot be better employed. This I write chiefly to remind you, how acceptable a line from you will be; and further, that I would very gladly be acquainted with your sentiments upon taxation, a topic which we expect at the approaching session will be copiously discussed. When you were so obliging as to send me the Maryland act, you had not considered it, perhaps you may have since had leisure to do so, and if you have, I need not tell you, what advantage may be derived from your observations. I am, dear sir, your obedient,

GEORGE WYTHE.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Member of the Continental Congress, now at York, Pennsylvania.

DEAR SIR—The letter concerning the leases was mentioned in the House, but so slighted, and treated in such a manner, that I had not occasion to acquaint the House with what you had written to me upon that subject. I had hopes, when I received your last obliging letter, that Sir William Howe would before this time have been driven out of Philadelphia, but it seems he remains there still; perhaps he will not find it an eligible station, nor think it worth holding, if our garrison at Mud Island Fort, which I think have done meritorious service, can be supported so as to keep his brother, in the British fleet, below the Chevaux de Frise. Our Assembly have entered on the consideration of taxes, which every one appears to concur in imposing, but have not made any great progress in it. Bills are ordered to be brought in for establishing the courts of justice, and one of them, I expect, will be presented to day. We were all very happy for a time, by

the report of General Burgoyne's surrender, but some begin to doubt the truth of it, because, as it is said, no letters in confirmation of it, have been received from the victorious Gates. Be so kind as to put an end to our suspense so soon as may be. The British ships of war are yet in the waters of the Chesapeake. I am, dear sir,

Your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WYTHE.

WILLIAMSBURG, 6th November, 1777.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
one of the Delegates in Congress,
for Virginia.

WILLIAMSBURG, August 1, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I find I am in your debt for interesting intelligence, and feel myself able to discharge it no otherwise than by thanking you; for I hear nothing in this quarter lately, worth communicating; I say discharge, for an ethic writer, of the first class, hath taught me, that *gratiam et qui retulit habet, et qui habet dissolvit.* By another way, however, I may be even with you. The pleasure you will be sensible of when I tell you, that letters from you at all times augment my happiness, must remunerate you for the trouble it costs you to write them. This consideration encourages me to hope for the continuance of a correspondence, valuable, I know, to one, and not otherwise, I flatter myself, to the other. Shall I put the papers in the suit brought in the name of Mr. Gaskins, against Mr. Pinckard, into the hands of our attorney general? I have better reasons for recommending him than that I have a kindness for him. Present my compliments to your brother, and my other countrymen, and be assured that I am your friend,

GEORGE WYTHE.

Honourable RICHARD HENRY LEE,
Member of Congress, for Virginia, Philadelphia.

WILLIAMSBURG, June 5, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I am now to acknowledge the receipt of two of your favours, during the session of Assembly, but there being little to communicate to you, and that, being a busy

time with me, has prevented my doing it sooner. The Assembly rose on Monday last; their only act, which can shortly aid our army, was one for raising a regiment of horse, which, I think, will be raised as fast as it can be accoutred. Another act they passed, will, also, produce aid to our army, I hope, but it will be some time first; it was for giving great encouragement to soldiers, and appointing recruiting officers all over the country, to attend all public places. By a third act, they foolishly repeated the experiment of raising volunteers: the first attempt was pardonable, because its ill success could not be foreseen; the second is worse than ridiculous, because it may deceive our friends; I am satisfied there will not be a company raised. I wish Congress would commute a good part of the infantry required from us, for an equivalent force in horse. This service opens to us a new fund of young men, who have not yet stepped forth; I mean those whose indolence or education, has unfitted them for foot-service; this may be worth your thinking of. We passed the bill of pardon, recommended by Congress, but the Senate rejected it. Your letter, about enlarging your powers over the confederation, was not proceeded on, because the nature of the enlargement was not chalked out by you so intelligibly as enabled the house to do any thing, unless they had given a *carte blanche*. Indeed, I believe, that, had the alterations proposed been specified, unless they had been mere form indeed, it might have been difficult to obtain their consent. A Frenchman arrived here a week ago, with a vast cargo of woollens, made and unmade, stockings, shoes, &c. fit for the army, fifty-thousand weight of powder, and other articles; the master had once sold the whole cargo, to the governor and council, for 5*s*. 3*d*. the livre, first cost; but, on suggestions from some of our forestallers, and those from Maryland, he flew off. Our bay is clear of the enemy. Nothing new here. I set out for Albemarle, within a day or two. Mr. Harvie will be with you in about three weeks. My compliments to your brethren of the delegation, and am, dear sir,

Your friend and servant,

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esquire,
Of the Virginia Delegation,
Yorktown.

WILLIAMSBURG, June 17, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I received your letter, and kind congratulations, for which I return you my thanks. In a virtuous government, and more especially in times like these, public offices are, what they should be, burthens to those appointed to them, which it would be wrong to decline, though foreseen to bring with them intense labour, and great private loss. I am, also, still to thank you for a former favour, enclosing a song and receipt. We have little new here. Colonel Clarke's expedition against St. Vincents, you know of; his prisoners are arrived at Chesterfield, and three of them brought to this place, to be severely dealt with; the enclosed paper will explain that matter. We have 300 men, under Colonel Bowman, in the Shawanee country, of whom we hope to receive good accounts; the destruction of the villages of the Cherokees, at Chuchamogga, and taking their goods, &c. has brought them to sue for peace; but the happiest stroke was the burning twenty-thousand bushels of corn, collected there for the use of the expeditions, which were to have been adopted at the great council. Governor Hamilton had called at the mouth of the Tanissee, as mentioned in the within paper. It is a cruel thought, that, when we feel ourselves standing on the firmest ground, in every respect, the cursed arts of our secret enemies, combining with other causes, should effect, by depreciating our money, what the open arms of a powerful enemy could not. What is to be done? Taxation is become of no account, for it is foreseen, that, notwithstanding its increased amount, there will still be a greater deficiency than ever. I own I see no assured hope, but in peace, or a plentiful loan of hard money.

I shall be obliged by your letters, when convenient to you to write. I never was a punctual correspondent to any person, as I must own to my shame; perhaps my present office will put it more out of my power; however, as it may sometimes furnish me with matter which may induce me to hope my letters may be worth sending, I may venture to say, you shall hear from me whenever I can get over the two-fold difficulty of many letters of absolute necessity to write, and an innate aversion to that kind of business.

I am, dear sir,
Your friend and servant,
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
Westmoreland.

IN COUNCIL, March 10, 1781.

SIR—At the request of Major General Baron Steuben, expressed in the enclosed letter, I take the liberty of laying it before you. The number of militia necessary to be called into the field, and time of their being there, we begged the baron to advise. He did so. Apprehending deficiencies, we ordered a considerably larger number. As soon as we received the letters informing us of the deficiencies from New Kent, and desertions from Cabin Point, finding, that, with those of Loudoun, the number would be reduced below what he desired, we ordered three hundred and fifty-one from the counties of Chesterfield and Dinwiddie. The time fixed by the baron, for the first reenforcement, was the 6th instant; our orders were that they should be there on the 5th or 6th, at furthest; they were not there, it seems, on the 7th. A number of horses were required for special purposes; we furnished the quartermaster with impressing powers. He applied for militia to aid him in the execution of the powers. We knew that an armed force to impress horses was as unnecessary as it was new. The fact has been, that our citizens, so far from requiring an armed force for this purpose, have parted with their horses too easily, by delivering them to every man who said he was riding on public business, and assumed a right of impressing. When, therefore, the militia have on their hands a sufficiency of real calls to duty, we did not think proper to harass them in cases where, we had reason to believe, they were not wished by the quartermaster as militia, but as servants. It was mentioned to the quartermaster, that, in our opinion, he could and should do but little in this neighbourhood, and that of Petersburg, which had been drained by constant impresses; nevertheless, we furnished him with blank powers, to be exercised where he pleased.

I have the honour to be,
With very great respect, sir,
Your most ob't and most humble serv't.
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, October 15, 1775.

DEAR SIR—I have by express, your obliging favour of the 5th; we were in some sort, prepared for the disagreeable intelligence of the small hopes of an accommodation, by reports and papers here intimating the same thing. Colonel Corbin has a letter from a hand, connected in some manner with Admon, that the plan was to withdraw all troops, and send men of war and cutters, to put a stop to all foreign trade, and that with each other, and so starve us into submission. If this is the case, perhaps Shuldham may not bring troops. Our affairs may perhaps take another turn, when the Congress petition and the Virginia representation against Lord Dunmore, reaches the people there. These furious measures seem to have been suddenly adopted on the arrival of Lady Dunmore, no doubt with cargoes of aggravating letters and misrepresentations from our hero, and just after some fears of Admon respecting the Spaniards, were quieted by their loss among the Algerines; whatever be our state, I hope we shall meet it with fortitude. Had we arms and ammunition, it would give vigour to our measures. We hourly hoped to hear of the arrival of the necessaries, but now fear we shall be defeated. A villain has given Lord Dunmore information of it, and he has six or seven tenders plying out for it about the capes. What can such a parricide deserve? We have been sitting a month, and yet see no hopes of a recess; we are thin, and some present unwell. Colonel Thomas is among the healthy. Nine companies of regulars are here, and seem very clever men; others we hear are ready, and only wait to collect arms. Lord Dunmore's forces are only one hundred and sixty as yet, entrenched at Gosport, and supported by the ships drawn up before that and Norfolk. I have heard of no attempt of his since seizing the printer, and a ship with flour, from Baltimore, except sending a party to Sleepy Hole, in pursuit of some powder we had there, which he missed about three hours. Most of the inhabitants of Norfolk, except tories, have moved out their families and valuable effects. Lord Dunmore, it is said, is much afraid of the riflemen, and has all his vessels caulked up on the sides, above men's height, however, they may perhaps pay him a visit, ere long. The good news relative to General Schuyler, came as a reviving cordial after the other; nothing has yet happened more important in my opinion, than this event, if completed, as I hope it is before now.

Pray present my affectionate compliments to your worthy brethren and the ladies.

I am, with great regard,
Your affectionate and obedient servant,
EDMD. PENDLETON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq. of Virginia,
now at Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, April 8, 1776.

Dear Sir—On Friday last, General Lee arrived safe in Williamsburg, in a very rainy day, and much fatigued; we considered him as a valuable acquisition, and esteem it a favour in Congress to spare him to this department, where, most people here think, the gentry who found Boston too hot for them, will come, and be joined by the much talked of powerful force from Europe. However, I am not of that opinion, and think they either mean a descent upon some other part of New England they like better, or, perhaps, by dividing our army, may purpose to return to Boston with greater advantage, or else to go to Halifax, and wait for the season to go up to Quebec. General Lee thinks if they come here, they will certainly make Williamsburg their object, and on that supposition is going to entrench it. I hear since I came away, he has ordered all the battalions from their stations to that place, which has made the people in town very happy, but I fear will be very alarming to other parts, particularly the Northern Neck, who were before uneasy, on the appearance of tenders in Potomac and Rappahannoc. It was mentioned in committee before I came away, it would be proper to request our delegates to transmit all public proceedings of Congress, to be laid before convention at their meeting; they will probably have wrote on the subject, but I mention it least they should from hurry overlook it. I have seen your resolves about reprisals. Is it considered as a law we are now to execute by granting commissions? or must we wait for a confirmation by our convention? Elections are coming on; it seems Colonel Francis and Mr. Carter, are left out, by the bulk of the freeholders being absent, not expecting a contest.

I am, dear Sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
EDMD. PENDLETON.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
at Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, Sept. 13, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Since your first letter gave me notice of your return to Philadelphia, I have not missed a post paying you my respects, till the last, when I happened to be much engaged. I thank you for your favour of the 2d, which enclosed a handbill of General Arnold's having compelled the enemy to raise the siege of fort Schuyler in so precipitate a manner, as to give us some valuable things; I hope the web is made so strong for him as, ere this, to make him the *governed* in some strong hold of ours, instead of *Governor of Fort William in North Britain.* The instance mentioned by General Gates, of his having paid for the scalps of innocent helpless people, is shocking to humanity, not to say, Christianity, and proves that English bravery has fled with it, and we shall that way derive advantages equal to the sufferings of our poor country women and children. It would seem as if a battle on Delaware was now unavoidable, and I shall daily expect to hear of it. From all accounts we have, our army are healthy, in spirits, and well supplied, and with the militia are greatly superior to the enemy. Our cause is just, as we are only defending our lives and properties, the gift of God, against the most cruel invaders; and therefore, I think we may with confidence, hope for the divine assistance. I have just heard from Williamsburg, that the Caroline troop of horse had marched to Portsmouth, but not the occasion. perhaps we may hear by post. I wish the enemy's ships had shared the same fate as their houses, that they might, deprived of those canvass wings, have no better means of moving than we have.

I am, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

To RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
in Philadelphia.

CAROLINE, October 11, 1777.

DEAR SIR—Your favour of September 16th, reached me yesterday, and that of the 1st instant, this morning. I had before received a very succinct account of the ..... victory we had complimented General Howe with, and every letter from Congress and the army conveyed the pleasing news that our army were on their march to a new rencounter with redoubled ardour and spirits; judge then sir, of my feelings.

when I was a fortnight in suspense for any certain intelligence, but yet almost every day teased with loose reports that Howe had passed Washington, and got into Philadelphia without firing a gun. The various causes assigned for it, rather increased than lessened the wonder, and I buffeted the fact wherever I met the story; your last favour clears up the perplexity, and assigns a very satisfactory cause for the retreat of our army. I am perfectly resigned to the providential interposition at the moment hostilities were begun, and by the same overruling hand, it may be that our purpose is another . . . . . effected without the effusion of blood, which would probably have then followed. We are now told that General Putnam possesses Philadelphia, with a strong body, and Howe encamped at the Chesnut Hills, seven miles off, with General Washington seven miles behind him; however this be, if we can keep the ships below the fort, the city cannot be eligible quarters for him long, and the ships will only serve to cover his retreat and embarkation for some other place; if that should be Virginia, and our army can give them another victory, or two, such as the former, before they come off; I think General Nelson with our militia, will give a good account of the rest. The state of our affairs in the north is pleasing, and by divine assistance, promises us the most important, beneficial consequences from a very unpromising root, the former surrender of Ticonderoga. The check given to Burgoyne's army, his wound, and the loss of so many men, must dispirit them and animate our people, who should however prepare for a most desperate defence from soldiers whose retreat is cut off, and will not soon agree to surrender. I am glad Congress have found a Mount Arrarat, and hope the communication between them and the southward, will now be open and regular. I have continued to write by every post, but uncertain whether they have reached you, as I was informed no northern rider came to Fredericksburg.

The crisis is important, may wisdom guide and union attend your councils, and may the God of battles strengthen the nerves of the soldiery, and enable them to crush tyranny, and establish peace and security for America.

Dear sir, affectionately yours,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq., at Congress, York.

EDMONSBURG, February 28th, 1785.

DEAR SIR—I have not been favoured with any letter from you since December 19th, nor do I expect another until after you shall have received mine; accepting of your kind offer of reviving a former correspondence. I have nothing worth communicating of foreign or domestic intelligence, and therefore it shall be the purpose of this, to make a few observations on some of our late laws. You'll have been informed, that an act has passed for incorporating the Episcopal church, the minister (where there is one) and vestry, are made the corporation in each parish, with power to take care of the property, and to elect a layman, to accompany the priest to the convention, where rulers are to be formed for the government of the church, and providing for a succession in the ministry. The vestries, as many of them are said not to be of that church, are all dissolved, and a new election is to be made on Easter Monday, by the members of the church only; their power, I am told, is confined to the affairs of the church, and that there are to be overseers of the poor in each parish, elected by the people at large, to make the right of representation as extensive as the power of taxation, and to avoid all suspicion of partiality in the assembly, to that church. The act was preceeded by a resolution that they would pass laws for incorporating any society of Christians, who should desire it. I am not able to discover in this law, any thing which can justly alarm any other society, no more than in another bill, (which is put off till the next session) for a general assessment to support religious teachers, with a right of appropriation in the prayer; yet in both some very sagacious gentlemen, can spy designs to revive the former establishment, which I believe, do not exist in the minds of any member of that church, the clergy and a few monarchy men excepted. A recommendation has gone forth to elect members to meet in convention at Richmond, in May, when, I am told, the clergy mean to recommend the plan adopted in New York, as the ground of proceeding; and so much for these laws.

An assize law hath at length passed, but its operation suspended, till the first of January next, I suppose with the intention to collect the sense of the country, upon its propriety and utility in general, as well as upon the particular plan of it, and give an opportunity of repealing or altering it, before it had begun to operate; a deep reflection on the subject, has long convinced me, that this measure is unexceptionable, and absolutely necessary for the speedy and easy administration

. . . . . this extensive country. But, whether we are arrived at the period proper for its adoption, depends upon many circumstances too delicate for me to mention, especially as the decision depends on others and not on me; with them therefore I leave it. The sheriffs complain of great difficulty in the collection of taxes; which, I believe, proceeds from a struggle between the merchants and planters, to *lessen* and *keep* up the price of tobacco. Why the assembly did not continue to receive commodities, I know not, but am persuaded they have injured both the people and the revenue by the measure. Adieu for the present. Dear sir,

Your most obedient and affectionate servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
in New York.

EDMONSBURG, March the 7th, 1785.

Dear Sir—Post day has again arrived without my having received a letter from you, or acquired any intelligence worth communicating. The continental storm having blown over, the systems of the courts of London and Madrid, may possibly change, particularly the latter, who can promise itself very little countenanue (in shutting up the navigation of the Mississippi from so great a number of its settlers, against natural right, and a fair construction of treaties,) from those powers, who have in their mediation, compelled the opening of the Scheldt, against explicit and repeated treaties. The precedent is strong, and applies a *fortiori*.

People here are sitting in judgment upon a late vote in Congress, appropriating a sum of money towards raising a new city for their residence. They call in question the *power* of Congress, to put their hand into the public purse for this purpose; and, admitting the power, arraign their *prudence* in the exercise of it, at a time, when our faith in the discharge of former engagements, calls for the utmost exertions of our abilities in finance, and perhaps requires more than can be complied with, without a degree of distress which endangers our infant government. Pray enable me, to advocate Congress on these heads, which at present I feel myself unequal to. You'll have heard, that the act providing for the payment of British debts, was one of two that was left unsigned by the speaker of the Delegates, for want of an House at the close of the session. I suppose it will be thought in Britain, that this was a contrivance to suspend the operation of the

remedy, inadequate as they may deem it; indeed we are told, that the North British merchants have applied to their ministry to enforce this part of their treaty. In the mean time, the learned in the law are divided here, on a question whether the act, having passed both branches of the legislature, is not in force, though it wants the signature of one of the speakers. I wish no parts of the law were subject to more important consequences, than the decision of that question. I am, with great regard, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
New York.

EDMONSBURG, Virginia, April 18th, 1785.

Dear Sir—An indisposition has prevented my paying you my respects for some weeks past, and am yet very feeble; however, I have taken up the pen, to thank you for your very obliging favours of the 17th and 26th of March. I am truly sensible of the almost unremitted demands of office upon your time, (and concerned to find that ill health is superadded. which, I hope, the approaching warm season, salutary to age, will remove) and whilst I acknowledge how much the value of a letter is increased by that circumstance, I am to entreat. you will not let your politeness interfere with business or health; I will be thankful for a letter when a leisure moment turns up, and you are quite at ease.

I think the slow movements of the emperor towards the field, strongly indicates his intention to make an amicable end of the dispute; and "true it is 'tis pity, but pity it is 'tis true," that he will probably in yielding, lose much *political* character in Europe; for to a philosophic mind it would appear more reasonable to yield a small claim, however just in itself and useful to a few of his citizens, and wait for some more convenient season for attaining it, than precipitately to involve his country and perhaps all Europe in a war, in the event of which, nothing would be certain, except the loss of much blood and treasure. Spain has probably hostile intentions, but if it be true, that she has begun by a squabble with Britain about the Musquito shore, and South Americans are in ill humour with her government, she may find her hands full of employment without disturbing us. I am glad to hear, that the European powers lend an attentive ear to

propositions for treaties of *commerce*, a subject more sonorous to an American, than *war*. I can't help thinking, that the British court are right, in having all propositions between them and us, agitated either in London or America; indeed during the war, and in the treaties for putting an end to it, Paris was very properly fixed on as the rendevouz of the plenipotentiaries, but in peace the case is altered, and we have only to take care that we enter into no engagements inconsistent with good faith to France, and satisfy that court of it, by communicating what is done, as becomes friends. I hope Mr. Adams will find the court of London sincere in her professions on this subject. Noise and dissipation, are stated enemies to wisdom and deliberation, in public councils in their neighbourhoods, and I should think that consideration alone, a sufficient reason for the determination of Congress to found a new city for their session, if they could there be secure of the wished for retirement; but I fear they will carry with them, the seeds of those evils wherever they go: pardon me sir, I don't mean in their conduct or dispositions, but considering them as the American court, the residence of foreign ministers and their suites, as well as the rendevouz of foreign travellers of distinction, I fear that virtue and quiet will be short lived in your new city.

I am happy to find that your sentiments accord with mine, on the subject of a general assessment, as I know they formerly did on that of circuit courts. I hear there are considerable clamours against both, and cannot foresee, what will probably be the decision of the next assembly upon either; but as your reasoning on both, though short, is very forcible, I know I shall have your pardon for publishing that as an extract, as it may be useful to the members, who I fear will need it, as I can truly say, that I have heard of but one elected, who is acquainted with business, and he not a very industrious one. I shall never publish any intelligence, which may be supposed to come to you from our ministers abroad, without particular permission.

There seems to be an untoward fate attending the impost, that when Rhode Island had just come into the measure, an opposition should be found in the senate of New York; and so I suppose they will throw in the black ball, one after another, and always defeat it.

Governor Harrison has lost his election in Charles City, which he imputes, I hear, to the intrigues of his old friend the speaker, and is, as usual, very angry, that he should meet with this reward from the people, for thirty-six years faithful

service. I am, with my best wishes for your health, and every sentiment of esteem and regard, dear sir,

Your affectionate and obedient servant,

EDMUND PENDLETON.

His Excellency Richard Henry Lee, Esq.,
New York.

WILLIAMSBURG, February 20th, 1776.

Dear Sir—I have just received yours of the 15th instant, and have snatched a moment to write a few lines in answer to it. I approve much of your plan of publishing the hand-bill, and would, before this, have executed it, if my indisposition and Mrs. Page's illness, added to an incessant round of business, had not prevented me.

The method you mention for removing the spikes from cannon, is certainly good; but it is said the cannon at Norfolk are rendered useless, by being broken at their trunnions and buts. I will endeavour, sir, to prevail on our committee to send you regularly authentic accounts of every material occurrence here, and of the state of the enemy's strength. I wrote you yesterday an account of the arrival of another man of war, and a transport or two; this report has not been contradicted, nor have we yet heard from whence or what these ships are. Captain Hammond of the Robuck, we are well assured, has behaved with great politeness and humanity to several of our people. Lord Dunmore had written a letter to Colonel Corbin, in which he offers to go to England to negotiate peace; he professes the warmest attachment to this country, and says that he lays hold on the last sentence in the king's speech, to offer his services to procure a lasting, speedy, and honourable accommodation. No one, but Lord Dunmore, could have applied that sentence in the manner he has. I will send you a copy of the letter by the post. Colonel Corbin laid the letter before the committee of safety, and received a letter from the committee, which I will also send you. In it we told the colonel, that we were neither empowered nor inclined to intermeddle with the mode of negotiation; that we looked to the Congress for the management of this important matter; but added, we would lay his letter before the assembly, which is to meet on their adjournment, and that Lord Dunmore might manifest his good intentions by suspending hostilities. Colonel Corbin set out this morning to Hampton, with orders to Colonel Grayson to send him with a flag of truce to Lord Dunmore. We gave him to un-

derstand, that his lordship should deliver up the slaves now with him immediately. The old gentleman went off in great hopes of procuring a month's truce at least, and seemed determined to give Captain Hammond a true statement of Lord Dunmore's conduct. Since writing my letter of yesterday, the committee have ordered down the saltpetre which had been sent to Petersburg, to be worked up by Buckstrout. I hope from this that they will at length encourage him, and enable him to carry on the manufacturing of gunpowder to a considerable extent. The report of the burning of Portsmouth was entirely without foundation.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant,

JOHN PAGE.

P. S. I think you had better attend the Assembly. You will be more wanted here than at the Congress.

J. P.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
of Chantilly.

WILLIAMSBURG, July 10th, 1778.

Dear Sir—I was not at home when the post brought your letter, and therefore could not acknowledge the receipt of it by its return; but snatch a moment by the return of this week's post, to thank you for your letter and paper enclosed. I am highly pleased with the answer of Congress to the British commissioners; it was a glorious contrast to their proposals. I heartily congratulate you on the retreat of the British army from Philadelphia, and on your return to that city, and hope shortly to have the pleasure to congratulate you on their total defeat, or capitulation at least. The sooner we can be informed of the defeat or escape of the enemy, the better; because I should think, in either case, we might lay aside the extravagant scheme of the volunteer horse and foot. I wrote a few lines yesterday to your brother, the doctor, in France, enclosing him the latest Pennsylvania papers, and the hand-bill giving an account of the flight and defeat of the British army, and sent my letter by a vessel which set sail in two or three days. The governor sent, by the same opportunity, some letters and despatches, I believe from Congress.

I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant,

JOHN PAGE.

To Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
A Delegate in Congress, at Philadelphia.

WILLIAMSBURG, October 15th, 1778.

DEAR SIR—I this moment received your letter of the first instant, enclosing the vote of Congress respecting the cannon in North Carolina. The board have not yet had leisure to consider whether they will accept of them on the terms proposed or not. I have just received a letter from Dr. Lee, informing me that he expected to procure the cannon and other military stores, which our board had written to Mr. William Lee to purchase for this state. The letter is of an old date, May the 27th, 1778, and therefore contains no news; but the doctor says he had been informed, that the British army was to be withdrawn, leaving a strong garrison at Halifax; and that the fleet was to exert its whole force in annoying our coasts, and cutting off our trade—by this means endeavouring to worry us into a compliance with the commissioners' propositions. I congratulate you on the success of the French fleet on the English coast. This, with the news of the loss of Dominica, and the frigates in the West Indies, and those at Rhode Island, added to the severe check their naval force has received in America, and the defeat of their army in two battles, must give a shock to the British ministry that I think they will not be able to withstand. The minority must gain strength every day; and I should even suppose that the militia, having arms in their hands, may feel themselves of importance enough to begin to think and judge for themselves; and if so, there must be at least a change of ministers and measures. The independence of America, and peace with France, may be the consequence of this—an event truly desirable; but I confess that I am almost afraid of making peace with England, before the deep rooted prejudices of some of our countrymen in favour of that artful people, are eradicated—or at least before we can conquer the aversion too many Americans have conceived against the French. I really am apprehensive, if a peace were shortly to take place, that the English would again engross nearly the whole trade of America, ingratiate themselves so with us, as almost to wheedle us into some connexions with them, which might prove fatal to our liberties, especially after they had sufficiently undermined the French interest in America, and had worked their court up to a proper pitch of jealousy and resentment; so that, though I ardently wish for peace, yet I am almost afraid of its consequences. I fear we have not wisdom and virtue enough to conduct ourselves properly in such a trying situation—when that luxury, avarice, and indolence, which we see already possessing so many Ameri-

can breasts, to the utter exclusion of every virtuous sentiment or feeling for their country, may be so much more completely indulged and gratified: and yet, such is our unhappy situation, from a thousand concurring circumstances, that I dread the consequences of another campaign. Should the French fleet be obliged to leave us for want of proper supplies, or be called off to the West Indies or to Europe, and should the enemy, discovering the difficulties we shall be under of supplying our army with provisions, resolve not to quit New York and Rhode Island; I fear we shall want more virtue to support us, than could be easily found on such an emergency. But heaven forbid that we should have any such occasion for such exertions of virtue. Adieu, my dear sir, and believe me to be, yours,

JOHN PAGE.

P. S. Since writing the within, the board have directed the agent for the state to pay for the cannon immediately, should they be approved of by the officer sent to receive them. I have enclosed you a copy of the paper you sent me, and which you received from the commercial committee, to show you that they have committed an error somewhere in their state of the account. J. P.

My dear Sir—Since your letter of the 1st of September, we have heard nothing with certainty respecting the northern army, and but little from that under General Washington. I fear the post must have fallen into Mr. Howe's hands, for we have seen nothing of him these two weeks past; we had a report yesterday, that Burgoyne, with his whole army, was totally defeated. I should be happy to hear it confirmed, but fear there is no truth in it, as no mention is made of the time or place, in which it happened, or by whom the victory was obtained. I shall be glad to be informed of the particulars of the action of the 11th, and where General Washington is at present. Has Congress moved from Philadelphia, or do you intend to stay and act like the Roman senators, who offered their throats to the Gauls to be cut? I was, the other day, in Williamsburg, where the people appeared to be just composing themselves after the fright which they were thrown into by the appearance of the fleet in our bay. The

militia, which was drawn down there, were in high spirits, and wished to be ordered to join General Washington, but our council would not permit General Nelson to march to the northward, as he desired. It may not be amiss to inform you of one of the late arts of the disaffected. They, knowing the reputation of Congress for truth, make use of the names of its members as the means of gaining credit to their infernal lies. At Frazier's ferry, I saw one Card, of Urbanna, who told me that he heard Colonel Corbin, at Mr. Braxton's, say, that he had seen a letter from you, in which you mention Howe's force, at that time at Elk, to be 17,000 men, and that a fleet of 200 ships was gone up the Delaware, with another army. By such base means, they endeavour to intimidate our people.

I am, dear sir, with great respect, your affectionate friend and humble servant,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

MANSFIELD, September 23d, 1777.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
In Congress, Philadelphia.

MY DEAR SIR—I am greatly obliged to you for your two last letters, which contain the most agreeable and important intelligence. Agreeable to your request, I have sent copies of them to your brother, and have been these two days busied in taking other copies for our friends; a little of the same sort of intelligence from Mr. Howe's army, would effectually determine our cause, and fix our independence beyond the power of the tyrant's arms. I have not yet heard whether our assembly have proceeded to business. One thing, however, I was informed of the other day, in Prince William, which was, that the old faction was determined again to attack your character in Assembly; for which purpose, their cats-paw has carried down with him to Williamsburg, an attested copy of your letter to Scott. I am at a loss to say whether their malice or their folly is greatest. I was of the opinion, that your last victory over them was so complete that they would hardly enter the lists with you again; but, in depraved minds, the hope of revenge is so sweet, they will attempt any thing and every thing to effect their wicked purpose. Can't you spare time to come and put to silence and

confusion, such a set of miscreants. Colonel Mason has not yet gone down; he is busy, I am told, in preparing a bill for a general assessment, and a militia bill.

I am, dear sir, with great respect,
Your affectionate friend,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

MANSFIELD, October 27th, 1777.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
In Congress, at Yorktown,
in Pennsylvania.

MANSFIELD, June 23d, 1778.

MY DEAR SIR—The newspapers inform us that Lord Carlisle, Governor Johnstone, and Mr. Eden, had arrived at Philadelphia, as commissioners from the court of London, but we do not learn what powers they are vested with, or whether they have any others than those set forth in the acts of Parliament. If they have nothing else to offer, I should suppose they could have no serious expectations that Congress would waste their time upon a subject which they have before considered, and, therefore, need not be over solicitous for their secretary to be admitted to Congress, unless they mean to try the arts of corruption, since the force of arms has failed. If that is their aim, I trust, they will find American virtue too stubborn to admit of any impressions from such base objects. Has the number of our forces increased so as to make our army respectable? Where are they, and what are they doing? What seems to be the design of the enemy? Have they received, or do they expect, any considerable reinforcements. We have no news in this part of the country. Farewell, my dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

MANN PAGE, Jun.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esquire,
In Congress, Yorktown, in
Pennsylvania.

FREDERICKSBURG, June 27th, 1781.

MY DEAR COLONEL—I am honoured with yours of [illegible] and find myself happy in having an officer in the [illegible] that gives satisfaction: nothing but an absolute necessity at *any time* induced the marquis to draw a single man from the north side of Rappahannock. he is well informed of their exposed situation, and when they were on the [illegible] it was on a supposition that this quarter would be attacked: and nothing saved us from a visit, but a fortunate circumstance in taking up all the bridges of the marquis's rear, and removing every thing from town that made an object, of which they got intelligence, and instantly struck at Charlottsville. On their pointing so far south, I suggested to the marquis, the propriety of sending the troops under my command, to the cultivation of their fields, under certain restrictions; I am this morning honoured with his approbation, and have given directions accordingly: they will return on furlough till called on, which will not be till danger of a serious nature appears. In the mean time, their present arrangements had better be continued, which will add more security to the internal defence of their own counties, should a party of plunderers visit you; however, this I leave to your own good judgment, well knowing your prudence and activity in times of alarm. A general exertion, and close attention, for a few months longer, will, I am perfectly certain, make us a happy people. With respect to our operations on James river, I refer you to Mr. Lee, who is now with me. Your letters to Congress, were despatched per express. I have every assurance of a plentiful supply of arms, by the first of next month; under these circumstances, I hope yet to see the Big Knife extricate herself. Congress have ordered three battalions of militia from Maryland, and four from Pennsylvania to our aid, and Maryland dragoons are now on their march. I am endeavouring to form a small legion of horse and foot, young men with no families, and volunteers, for the general protection of the four lower counties; pray add your influence. They will cover the country in time of harvest, and give the planters and farmers opportunity to cultivate their fields. Colonel Nelson has general instructions on that head. I am, with perfect respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE WEEDON.

Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Westmoreland.

FREDERICKSBURG, August 2d, 1781.

MY DEAR COLONEL—I am favoured with yours of yesterday's date, by *Mr. Lee*, and rest perfectly contented on the score of intelligence, from the precautions you have so wisely adopted. I informed you in a previous letter, that a small supply of arms and powder, would at any time be sent to you on your order. Having no continental stores of a military nature at this post, I have taken the liberty of sending you a reenforcement, the property of the state, for which stretch of authority, I must apologise to government. They wishing the appropriation of the arms to be applied according to their own ideas, at present, from the difficulties that have occurred in consequence of the derangements in our state, they find it hard to apply them properly; I have, however, persuaded them out of one thousand stand for the use of the Neck, which at this time, lays at Noland's ferry, and will be brought forward so soon as I can get wagons. These will be distributed by their order, which will issue in favour of the counties, who make their requisitions to the executive. *Communicate this hint to your brother, ... in the four lower counties*; by which means, I make no doubt you will immediately get in condition as to arms. Lead we have none; I have represented it several times to government, and was ever answered they had none to furnish; the mines having failed, I am at a loss what to advise you to on this head, and must leave it to your own invention and activity. The northern mail being taken at, or near Wilmington, and carried to New York, we have no intelligence from that quarter this week. The operations before New York, are (you may be well satisfied) of a serious nature; how far we have carried our approaches, can't tell, having lost my letters by the villany of the post-rider, or some other enemy. Not a word of an official nature from General Greene; reports however are favourable. I am, with perfect esteem and attachment,

Your affectionate friend,

GEORGE WEEDON.

Col. RICHARD HENRY LEE,
commanding in Westmoreland co.

CAMP, GLOUCESTER COURT HOUSE, 20th Sept., 1781.

DEAR SIR—I am so anxious that the distressed situation of our army and that of our allies, may not be the occasion of fatal consequences, that I most earnestly request you to

give every assistance in your power, not only to aid the commissioners in the collection, but in immediately forwarding the cattle so collected, with the utmost despatch to General Washington's army. Permit me to assure you most faithfully, that this so necessary supply, can alone give the promised glorious end of our honourable struggle, and every nerve must be strained, that a moment be not lost. Your judgment will best direct the nearest rout, and have most perfect dependence, that the Northern Neck will distinguish itself on this occasion. You will turn out a sufficient number of militia instantly, to forward this work. Orders are gone on to the commissioners; and this is only to pray your influence on so important and momentous an occasion. You are hereby empowered to impress every thing necessary to facilitate this business. I am with esteem and respect,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE WEEDON, B. G.

Col. Richard Henry Lee, Westmoreland co.

Sir—Lord Dunmore orders me to the Ohio with his lordship, to endeavour to put matters on a footing to establish a lasting peace with the brave natives; who, in my opinion, would behave well, were they not poisoned by the blackguard traders allowed to go among them, to their different towns. This prevents my attending the general Congress, where I would expect to see the spirit of the Amphyctions shine, as that illustrious council did in their purest times, before debauched with the Persian gold. The fate of America depends upon your meeting, and the eyes of the European world hang upon you, waiting the event. Despotism, and the Roman Catholic religion is established in Canada. Can we be said to enjoy liberty, if the villain who ravishes our wives, deflours our daughters, or murders our sons, can evade punishment, by being tried in Britain, where no evidence can pursue him?

A governor to suppose me guilty of a crime, and tell me that there can be no fair trial in America; that is, there are not honest men to be found in my country to try me, he must send me home to rot in Newgate, is shocking to human nature. Could I get within musket shot of him, I would put him to death; he should never attempt to send home another. In the mean time, I must acquaint you, that the situation of America, that is, the parts of it I am acquainted with, is un-

happy in not being provided in arms and ammunition. At the Congress this ought to be privately taken into consideration; a plan laid for encouraging numbers of gun-lock smiths to come in; a number of locks to be imported with caution, to prevent suspicion; and as many arms as could be got. I imagine that we want 100,000 stand of arms. We have great difficulty in fitting out the few men we want on this occasion. Contrive a supply of ammunition; let some be brought in by every ship. I wish the united wisdom of America may prevent it, but I expect, from their determined system of arbitrary power at home, that matters will come to extremity. It appears to me, that they intend to irritate America into rebellion, and then govern us like a conquered people. Try all fair means with the greatest address to avoid it, but be prepared for the worst as soon as possible; this ought not to escape consideration at this time, and it is a thing that requires the utmost address. Let us be provided with arms and ammunition, and individuals may suffer, but the gates of hell cannot prevail against America; our greatest enemies would be the despotic tools of Canada. Before provision is made for these things, the hand of power will prevail. I wish the happy issue of your councils, and am with respect, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

Berkeley Courthouse, August 27th, 1774

P. S. Pardon this scrawl, I am on the march.

My dear Colonel—A grateful remembrance of old friendship will, I hope, apologize for my troubling you so often, without hearing the least whisper from you, since I came from the Shawanese expedition.

The important session of Assembly, big with matters of great moment, is now at hand. I wish that a firm and dispassionate conduct may shine through the whole, and all our pasions may be soothed by agreeable accounts from the new Parliament. I must acknowledge my dread to hear from them. Several sensible men, lately from England, inform us the people there seem but little affected with our dispute; and that, they, without thought or consideration, declare that America ought to be taxed.

In these troublesome times, it is absolutely necessary that you pay the men employed in the late expedition; they have done honour to our country. The Indians are daily deliver-

ing up prisoners and horses, and do really stand in awe of us. Unless the men are paid off directly, their certificates will be sold, for a fourth part of their value, to pedlars and store-keepers, and the brave men who did the service, be nothing the better of their pay. Appoint commissioners from below to settle the accounts; let no interested persons, or their connexions, be concerned in the affair; send the squire up again, Tom Marshall and Frank Peyton, and as many more as you think proper. By this means the people will have justice done them, and, at the same time, many thousands will be saved to the country. The House must settle what pay they are to get per day, and from what time they are to be paid, as they were raised and detained some considerable time for want of arms and ammunition; this time was employed in disciplining them for the service; but, without the consideration and sanction of the House, the commissioners may think it matter of altercation. With the greatest economy, matters on this quarter were managed; but the expense of Fort Pitt must be kept apart by itself, as I am afraid the reverse of economy will appear there; it has no connexion with the rest of the campaign. I would have you discharge that garrison immediately; but then, I desire you may keep my opinion to yourself. In renewing the militia law, let there be one hundred well appointed horse disciplined in every county; to be superior in horse commands the field, and no enemy can safely show himself out of sight of their camp; we are immediately apprised of the strength of their escorts, and of every motion they make, and can act accordingly. At the courts martial, let a majority present determine any matter; and, during an attack, or in battle, let the men be subject to the articles of war, with what alteration the House thinks proper. Until the men, who want fire-arms, can be provided, let them be furnished with spears and tomahawks; the iron of the spear to be made in shape of a triangular bayonet, only broader at the shoulder, to go on the staff with a large socket, and thin plates of iron reaching up the staff about two feet, to stiffen it, and guard it against any cutting instrument, the plates being part of the socket; the spear of the men in front to be six inches larger than the musket with fixed bayonet; those of the second rank eighteen inches longer than the spears in front and those in the third rank eighteen inches longer than the second, that three spears may reach the breast of the enemy at once, before our men could be touched with the first bayonet. This moment, I am informed that the Assembly is prorogued till May; confusion worse confounded; I wish, for the en-

couragement of the soldiers, that you would meet in provincial Congress, and order an emission of bills of credit for their payment. I am sorry that Lord Dunmore may depend on it, the militia will never obey his orders again. If the country has a mind to secure useful men, it is absolutely necessary to contrive some method to pay the common men, if the officers and provisions should lie over; let us be firm, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against us. A handful of men in Canada, six broken regiments from France, withstood, for five years, all the force of British fleets, and armies from home, and fifteen or twenty thousand Americans every campaign. They gained several victories over us, and chance had a great hand in their reduction at last. What can we do, if united. We only want a navy to give law to the world, and we have it in our power to get it.

I am, dear sir, firmly your's,

ADAM STEPHEN.

February 1st, 1775.

February 17th, 1775.

DEAR SIR—Since I had an opportunity of forwarding the enclosed, I put it in my pocket, and thought I should never trouble you with it, but I cannot forbear communicating my sentiments upon so alarming an occasion. If in the colony Congress the members should resolve to acquaint the men employed in the last expedition, that they would be paid, as soon as the general commotions are settled, it would keep them in heart; and, indeed, it would be highly imprudent to disgust a body of such useful men, at this important era; for, by what I can hear, it will come to the shedding of blood, unless providence interferes in a very special manner; for my part, before I would submit my life, liberty, and property to the arbitrary disposal of a corrupt, venal aristocracy, the wanton and effeminate tools of power, I would set myself down, with a few friends, upon some rich and healthy spot, six hundred miles to the westward, and there form a settlement, which, in a short time, would, command attention and respect. I wish you happy, and have the honour to be, with respect,

Dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE,
Of Westmoreland.

SIR—Since my last, we have received advices from the Wiandots, a sensible nation, who live near to Detroit, and have great influence on the contiguous tribes of Indians. It may be plainly seen that they are a great deal attached to the commanding officer at Detroit. Some of them have promised to come and hear what we have to say; that is their policy; they have, very lately, killed a trader's servant, and carried off part of the goods. The nation has made an apology, and the goods are restored to the owner. We have advices, likewise, from the tribes living up the Alleghany river, about one hundred and sixty miles above this place; several of them have been at a treaty held at Niagara, and inform us that many Indians are gone to Albany, but a greater number to Caghnuwaga, near Montreal, at the instigation of Gay, Johnston, and Carlton.

The commandant of Niagara and Johnston, told them to watch our motions here very narrowly, and the red coats, and other English, would fight us by ships, whilst the Indians kept picking us off on our frontier; that we could not hold out long for want of powder, as we usually had it from Britain, and could not make any amongst ourselves; that he would supply them plentifully with powder, and every thing else. I can see that the Indians are very jealous, greatly divided, and at a loss how to act. General Schuyler's success will settle the matter; but an unsuccessful attempt will determine the greatest part of the western Indians against us; perhaps make it necessary to take possession of Niagara and Detroit.

We have reason to expect all the Indians, who intend to come to us, will attend next week.

I have the honour to be, with respect sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

ADAM STEPHEN.

PITTSBURGH, September 23d, 1775.

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE,
of Virginia, Philadelphia.

DEAR SIR—I languished to hear from you, and at last received the pleasure of your letter yesterday. The sending Americans to their antipodes, was as wicked and extensive a plan, as the agents of the devil could form on earth. I suppose the intended attack on our state, is a creature •

minister Burgoyne engendered in Lady Dunmore or his Lordship, who doubtless will attend with his council, in order to add some more murderous beauties to his Ethiopian seraglios.

Should they get the troops which I reckon impossible, they may distress individuals, but can do nothing towards conquering our country. To prevent this attack, and obviate all difficulty, our principal object ought to be the destruction of their army in the Jerseys. Virtue is certainly wanting, or we should have had men enough to have effected it before this time. The Virginians, with a few Jersey men, and as few Pennsylvanians, are likely to bear the burden of the day: the myriads of the north: the great warriors, who were to do the business, if we found money, seem cloyed of fighting, and are wonderfully backward in turning out. I wish no attention had been given to the defence of the western frontier, further than having the militia supplied with ammunition, and embodied. The clouds which threaten from Canada, and the savages, and all other *petites*, whould have dispersed, yea, dissolved like meteors, upon the destruction of Howe's army. On Monday, the 14th, I resolved the enemy should make compensation for their excursion to Boundbrook; I went along the out posts of my division, with General Maxwell, and planned the attack of their pickets, at Amboy and Borum town. Captain Conway, of the first Jersey regiment, behaved to admiration, brought off three out sentries without disturbing the guard, and got the countersign; in short, he had nothing to do but kill, or bring off, fifty men of the picket, when he was unhappily abandoned by the men of the second Jersey regiment, and obliged to drop the affair.

The attack at Borum town, was more successful, the picket were all taken or killed, except three.

I am, with great esteem, dear sir,
Your most obedient humble servant,
ADAM STEPHEN.

CHATHAM, April 22d, 1777.

Colonel RICHARD HENRY LEE,
in Congress, Philadelphia.

PARIS, September 21st, 1778.

MY DEAR BROTHER—By my letter to the committee of this date, you will see that I have delivered to the commissioners here, a copy of the treaty which I had negotiated with Holland, and which I have strong reasons for believing I could have soon brought to a conclusion, had my authority

from Congress been sufficient. But what will be the issue now may be easily foreseen; the overweening self sufficiency of *one*, and the latent plans that every one supposes has been formed of contriving Mr. D——'s return to H——, with other and similar motives, will all conspire to interrupt the success. Besides, very unhappily, things are minutely communicated to a person, that, in my opinion, ought not to be trusted with any thing; of this person Congress has been informed, I understand, having formerly given intelligence relative to the treaty with France. If this business with Holland is communicated, in its present stage, to our enemies, or their emissaries in that country, of which they have a great number, it will infallibly be obstructed. All this I expect, however; I have done my duty, and hope Congress will approve my conduct. I am entirely of opinion with you relative to the estate and will; send the proper instruments, as soon as they can be got ready, which is attended with more difficulty than you can well imagine, in a strange country. The season is now so far advanced, that it will be impossible to get the documents to you time enough to proceed on the business before winter twelve months, as about Christmas is the only time for such a business to be done. I wish to know accurately, when and how the principal money is to be repaid that is put into the continental loan offices; and if, in the mean time, the billets given for cash, can be sold or converted into cash, easily and without loss. Pray answer me in this as soon as possible, and send me the rest of Congress proceedings, having only received one volume, for which I greatly thank you; my station is quite out of the way for sending newspapers, pamphlets, &c.; I understand you get them from hence. I return to Germany immediately, and lose no occasion of promoting the wishes of Congress in that quarter. The Virginia business is a heavy one; I am afraid the ministry here will not do what the state expected, and without them the business cannot be accomplished in this country, but on such terms, and in such a manner, as is shamefully horrible to think of; the first demand, however, is nearly accomplished, but there is four times as much yet to be done; I am now pushing the subject as far as I can. Your sons are well. We have not any material news, and I have only time to assure you of my continued and steady affection.

Adieu.

WILLIAM LEE.

RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq. Member of Congress from the state of Virginia.

CAMP, December 12, 1775.

My dear Friend—I have just received your letter by Mr. Custis. I am heartily glad that you have sent a committee into Canada, but *inter nos,* think it might have been better chosen. Payne has certainly not the *mannieres** . . which, according to Lord Chesterfield, and my observation, are so requisite to captivate the French; for heaven's sake, my dear friend, why are you not more decisive, and wherefore are any of the sea-port towns suffered to furnish the men of war with fresh meat, or even with a single carrot; this indecision will ruin us; this cursed tenderness for the sea-port towns will at least prolong the war and all its calamities. It was indecision that has thrown your affairs in Virginia, into their present situation; had my opinion been thought worthy of attention, Lord Dunmore should have been disarmed of his teeth and his claws. I proposed sending Tryon, and all his tories, at New York. I knew if it was moved in Congress his excellency would be instantly apprised of it, and of course the possibility of effecting it would not be left to us; in this persuasion, I would have struck the stroke, and applied afterwards to your mightiness for approbation. You will justly accuse me of self conceit and egotism, but I have not yet done. I propose, therefore, the following measures: First, To seize every governor, government man, place man, tory, and enemy to liberty, on the continent, to confiscate their estates, or, at least, lay them under heavy contributions, for the public; their persons should be secured in some of the interior towns, as hostages for their treatment of those of our party whom the fortune of war shall throw into their hands; they should be allowed a reasonable pension out of their fortunes for their maintenance. Secondly, I propose that New York be strongly garrisoned and fortified, or destroyed. Thirdly, That a strong flying camp, with not only an able officer at their head, but an officer who has the *reputation* of being able, in order to inspire the people with confidence, be kept about Hampton, York, or Williamsburg, in Virginia; another, not quite so strong, about Alexandria; and a third strong one about Annapolis, in Maryland. Fourth, That Charlestown, in Carolina, should be well secured. Fifth, and lastly, That, if the Canadians desire it, you spare no expense in furnishing them with an army; but, above all, that you be extremely careful in the choice of officers sent to that country; that they be not only men of strict integrity, but of a frank, open address, with elevated sentiments ex-

* Out in the original.

pressed in their manner. I should think such men may be found with you more easily than in these provinces, as I find you propose in your letter, for I never saw a people so universally destitute *du l'air du monde*, as these here; Mr. Bodwoin, an invalid, is the only exception. These propositions I before offered to a member of your Congress, with one other, respecting the construction of your army, here omitted.

Recruiting goes on here more briskly than we expected; the men are strange mortals, but they have virtue, and many good qualities. Adieu, my dear friend.

Your's affectionately,

C. LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 5, 1776.

My dear Friend—I congratulate the public, and you, one of her best members, on the late glorious event, the flight of the tyrants, cut throats, from Boston; although I do not know whether it is a matter of congratulation, for it appears to me, that as our affairs grow more prosperous, the namby pamby's of the senatorial part of the continent (great and small) grow more timid and hysterical; I am sorry to say it, but your committee of safety seem to be as desperately and incurably infected with this epidemical malady as the provincial congress of Maryland, or the quondam assembly of Pennsylvania. Your brother, Mr. Page, Payne, and I believe Mercer, are indeed exceptions. If you could be spared from the Congress, your presence might inspire vigour and wisdom. Their economy is of a piece with their wisdom and valour; to save money, we have no carriages to our guns; to save money, we have no blankets for our men, who are, from want of this essential, dying by dozens at Suffolk. Had I gun carriages, I could flatter myself with almost a certainty of driving the pirates, and shutting them out for ever from the harbour of Norfolk. I have, however, ordered them to be made with all possible expedition, and then shall attempt this capital stroke. My command from the circumstances of the country being intersected by navigable waters, and the enemy being supplied with canvass to fly to any spot they choose, is disagreeable. I may make a very shabby figure, without any real demerits of my own. I know not where to turn, or where to fix myself. I may, as Richard the Third says, be in the west, when I should serve my sovereign in the north. I can only act from surmises, and I may

surmise wrong; but I must venture, and take my measures accordingly. I am apt to think that Williamsburg and York will be their object; the possession of the first is not only most temptingly advantageous, from its command of the two rivers and a most abundant country, but its being a capital, the possession would give an air of dignity and decided superiority to their arms, which, in a slave country, is of the utmost importance. Your dominion over the blacks is founded on opinion; if this opinion falls, your authority is lost. On this principle I am drawing down some battalions, and shall, when I can provide intrenching tools, work for the security of these places. For God's sake, why do you dandle in the Congress so strangely? why do you not at once declare yourself a separate independent state? *I am much obliged* to you for keeping my letter in your hands, and am happy that the stigma was not levelled at me. Appropos, will you move, as my command is separate, and scarcely any letters are addressed to me, even those not written by the members of the Congress, which do not relate to public business, whilst I continue in this separate command, should be frank, for the expense is very considerable. I wish you would cuff Dr. Rush, for not writing. I expect and insist upon it. A Colonel Grayson, (whom I suppose you are acquainted with) will be soon with the Congress, to make application for some military establishment; I am desired to recommend him as a man of extraordinary merit. We must have a continental hospital in the southern department; Dr. M'Clurg, is, I am told, very well qualified to be at head of it. My little German engineer is (as the New Englanders say) a nice man. But I wish I knew what pay and rank you intend him; I have hitherto supported him myself, but shall send in a bill for his nourishment. Adieu, my dear senator,

Your's, and your brother's,

Most affectionately,

C. LEE.

WILLIAMSBURG, April 12, 1776.

MY DEAR FRIEND—I am much pleased with the appointment of the Congress of the two engineers, and not less so with ..... establishment; but at the same time am a good deal dissatisfied by an omission of the provincial congress of Virginia in not having mentioned a company of artillery which they had already raised, and at the head of which a Captain Innis was placed; you perhaps know him, he was

formerly usher of the German school here, is a man of extraordinary virtue, good sense and knowledge; the thought of discharging such men is extremely disagreeable. I hope some means may be devised of providing for him in a manner adequate to his merit. If a commissary of ordnance, is to be an established office, it would suit him; there is, I understand, to be, likewise, a commissary of musters, I would beg leave to recommend a Mr. Archer, who has a most unexceptionable character, and lost his all, his household goods and slaves, in the destruction of Norfolk. These sufferers have certainly, (when qualified for the discharge of their duty) the first and most solid claim to the favour of the Congress. As I can have no jobs in view, as I have no predilections or connexions, I shall make no scruples of appointing to act, and entreating the Congress to confirm my appointments. I have myself no doubt, that the first attempt of the tyrant's mercenaries will be on Virginia. My opinion of your troops and officers, is, thank God, so good, as to put me entirely at my ease with respect to action, corps to corps. I only wish your provincial Congress and committee of safety, had taken some precautions for the security of your great navigable rivers against their piratical inundations; and in my opinion, nothing could be easier effected. Perhaps I may differ from the generality of sea-faring people; but as they have their prejudices, and are like other professions, a *servum pecus*, I shall not give up my opinion. I would then propose fitting your rivers with twelve or eighteen oared boats, mounting a six-pounder at the head of each, fortifying the sides with occasional mantlets, musket proof, and manning them with stout volunteers, whose principle should be boarding. I am mistaken, when we are sufficiently provided with fleets of this kind, if a single tender will show itself in your rivers. I have already, for experiment sake, sent out one boat, armed and principled in this manner, on a cruise, and expect with impatience the issue. The men have their cutlasses and pistols, and seem to taste the project. I shall order twenty for each great river; the expense is trifling, and the spirit, the very principle of coming to close quarters, will inspire naturally the people with confidence in their own force and valour. Another great point I seem in a fair way of obtaining; the conciliating your soldiers to the use of spears; we had a battalion out this day; two companies of the strongest and tallest, were armed with this weapon; they were formed something like the Triarii of the Romans, in the rear of the battalions, occasionally either to throw themselves into the intervals of the line, or to form a third, second,

or front rank in close order. It has a fine effect to the eye, and the men in general seemed convinced of the utility of the arrangement. In two days, I shall visit Norfolk, Suffolk, and Kemp's landing.

Your's, affectionately,

CHARLES LEE.

RICHMOND, December 11th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I was, by Thursday's post, favoured with your's of the 26th of November. We had begun to despair of a Congress being made up in time for a decision on the case referred to them by the resolutions of our last session. I now hope that we may yet hear from you, on that subject, before our adjournment. The bill on the resolutions in favour of the treaty of peace, mentioned in my last, is not yet reported. It will, I am persuaded, need the reenforcement of an exhortation from Congress. The Glasgow merchants have authorized their agents here to compromise for the payment of their debts in four years, and a memorial will, I understand, be presented to that effect in a few days. My next will inform you of the result. The past week has been spent chiefly on the assize bill, which yesterday past the house of delegates with a very feeble opposition, and a very few dissenting voices. Its fate now depends on the senate. It is pretty analogous to the nisi prius establishment of England. The number of assize courts is seventeen. A smaller number was proposed, but we thought ourselves lucky in being able to give general content by such an augmentation. The counties of Northumberland, Westmoreland, Richmond, and Lancaster, form one district; the court house of the first being the seat of the assize court. The friends of this measure here considered it as a foundation for a very important and salutary amendment of our judicial system. The bill for a general assessment has not yet undergone a discussion; the same is the case of the militia bill. The scheme for opening the navigation of the Potomac, which has been settled between the Maryland and .... gentlemen, is before the House of Delegates, and will be favoured, as far as the objectionable amount of the tolls will admit. As the concurrence of Maryland in this scheme is necessary, some difficulties will attend its progress. The difficulty of providing for a representation of this state in Congress, under the act for the annual meet-

ing of the Assembly, has been a subject of conversation. The loss of that benefit is a serious matter; but is not the appointing of delegates a year before they are to serve, rather a singular expedient? The vacancies in the council had all been filled before the receipt of your recommendation of General Gates. I must beg the favour of you to excuse my not obeying, by this post, the last request in your letter, as to the expediency of a continental convention—having, at present, only time to add, that, with great respect and regard, I have the honour to be,

Your obedient, and very humble servant,
JAMES MADISON, Jun.

RICHMOND, December 25th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—Be pleased to accept my congratulations on the event which has given to your talents a station, in which they cannot fail to be equally useful to the public, and honourable to yourself. I offer them with the greater pleasure too, as such an event is a proof that Congress have unfettered themselves from a rule, which threatened to exclude merit from a choice, in which merit only ought to prevail.* The assize bill has, since my last, past into a law. The senate made no material change in it, and gave an almost unanimous suffrage to it. The only hesitation with them was between that plan and another, which would have rendered the circuit courts independent of the general courts. The former, which follows the English model, unites the advantages of a trial of facts, where facts can be ascertained with greatest certainty and cheapness, with a decision of law, where such decision can be made with most wisdom and uniformity. The advantage of the latter consisted in removing the inconveniency of making up the issues and awarding the judgments, in the general court, which it was supposed would increase expense, if not delay, and particularly require the service of a double number of lawyers. Experience will probably show that the latter supposition is exaggerated, and that the system preferred, is at least the best to begin with. The general assessment bill was ordered to be engrossed by forty-four against forty-two, and has since, by forty-five against thirty-seven, been postponed till November next, and is to be print-

* Mr. Lee had been elected president of Congress.

ed for immediate consideration. An act incorporating the Episcopal church, has passed in a form less offensive than the one proposed at the last session. The bill for payment of British debts was under debate yesterday; its passage seems probable, but there is no reason to fear that attempts will yet be made to trammel it. It still takes seven years for payment, though the Glasgow merchants have signified their assent to four years. The merchants of this town and Petersburgh have remonstrated against the idea of giving the British merchants a summary recovery, at the periods of the instalments. The bill for opening the Potomac, is suspended on the result of a conference. General Washington, General Gates, and Colonel Blackburn, are commissioned to hold conferences with Maryland on the subject. A bill for opening James River, on a different plan, has passed the house of delegates. A bill will also probably pass for surveying the waters of those two rivers to their sources, the country between them, and the western waters, and the latter down to the Ohio. It will also probably provide for a survey of the different routes for a communication between the waters of Elizabeth River and those of North Carolina. In the course of the last week, a proposition was made to empower Congress to collect the imposts within this state, as soon as twelve states should unite in the scheme. The arguments which prevailed against it, were the unfavourable aspect it would present to foreigners; the tendency of the example to inferior combinations; the field it would open to contraband trade; its probable effect on the temper of Rhode Island, which might thwart other necessary measures which require the unanimity of the states; the improbability of the union of twelve states on this new ground, a failure of which would increase the appearance of discord in their policy, and give fresh triumph and invitation to Rhode Island. I have not yet found leisure to scan the project of a continental convention with so close an eye, as to have made up any observations worthy of being mentioned to you. In general, I hold it for a maxim, that the union of the states is essential for their safety against foreign danger and internal contention; and that the perpetuity and efficacy of the present system cannot be confided in. The question therefore is, in what mode and at what moment the experiment for supplying the defects ought to be made. The answer to this question cannot be made without a knowledge greater than I possess, of the temper and views of the different states. Virginia seems, I think, to have excellent dispositions towards the confederacy; but her assent or dissent to such a proposition would pro-

bably depend much on the charge of having no opponent capable of rousing the prejudices and jealousies of the Assembly against innovations, particularly such as will derogate from their own power and importance. Should a view of the other states present no objections against the experiment, individually I would wish none to be presupposed here.

With great esteem and regard,
I am, dear Sir,
Your obedient and humble servant,
JAMES MADISON, Jun.

To the Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Virginia.

ANNAPOLIS, December 16th, 1683.

Dear Sir—I am particularly happy to hear by your brother, that you have almost recovered from the indisposition, with which you have been lately afflicted: an event I must consider fortunate to the state and your family, for I flatter myself, when perfectly restored, you will not withdraw yourself from the public service. It must be hoped that those measures, which have hitherto, will not always, prevail; as to establish in our public councils, a greater regard for public faith, and in private life, for morality, your exertions joined with those of some worthy men, must certainly be more successful. I am called on a theatre to which I am a perfect stranger. There are before us some questions of the utmost consequence that can arise in the councils of any nation: the peace establishment; the regulation of our commerce, and the arrangement of our foreign appointments; whether we are to have regular or standing troops to protect our frontiers, or leave them unguarded; whether we will expose ourselves to the inconveniences, which may perhaps be the loss of the country westward, from the impossibility of preventing the adventurers from settling where they please; the intrusion of the settlers on the European powers, who border on us, a cause of discontent and perhaps of war, as with us a constant state of warfare with the savage tribes, to the ingrafting a principle in our constitution which may in its consequences, as it ever hath done with other powers, terminate in the loss of our liberty. How we are to counteract the narrow and illiberal system of commercial policy in the European powers, and what connexion we are to have with them, are also questions of the first import. If your

health will permit, I shall be particularly happy to have your opinion upon these several subjects. It is my desire to hear from you as frequently as possible, and upon those subjects before us, which I shall be happy to make known to you. I am, with the utmost respect and esteem,

Your sincere friend and servant,
JAMES MONROE.

Answer of Richard Henry Lee.

CHANTILLY, January 5th, 1784.

DEAR SIR—I have duly received the letter, that you were pleased to favour me with, on the 16th of December last. I am very sensible of your kind sentiments respecting my health; I am indeed restored beyond my expectations, but yet I am very far from being so circumstanced, as to promise hopes of being soon in a state to venture again on the stormy sea of politics, and public business. Few, I believe, feel more sensibly than myself, how much our unhappy country suffers, and is likely to suffer, from the want of those qualities, and such conduct, as are certainly indispensable to the success and well being of society. And it would seem that such feelings are natural to a man, who has laboured for more than twenty years in the public service, and indefatigably so, for the last ten years, to secure the public liberty and those blessings that ought to attend its possession. You do me much honour, by asking my poor opinions concerning the Congressional questions, that are stated; they are of great moment, no doubt, and I heartily wish that they may finally receive proper determination. You are perfectly right, sir, in your observation concerning the consequences of a standing army, that it has constantly terminated in the destruction of liberty. It has not only been constantly so, but I think it clear from the construction of human nature, that it always will be so; and it is really unfortunate for human freedom, safety, and happiness, that so many plausible arguments are ever at hand to support a system, which both reason and experience prove to be productive of the greatest of human evils—slavery. But it may be questioned—Why, to avoid possible ills, should we adopt measures which in their nature produce the highest evil? The spirit of the 4th section of the 6th article of the conferation, plainly discourages the idea of a standing army, by the special injunctions concerning a

well regulated militia, which is indeed the best defence, and only proper security for a free people to venture upon. To guard our frontiers from Indian invasions, to prevent irregular settlements, and to secure the possessions of foreign powers from the encroachments of our people, which may provoke foreign or Indian wars, seem to be the reasons assigned for their adoption of this mischief working system—a standing military force. But surely it is the business of other powers, to secure their own possessions, and punish the violators of them; and it would be as new, as it would be improper, to keep a standing army, to prevent the encroachments of our own citizens upon foreign states: it will ever be sufficient to disavow such proceedings and to give the culprits up to justice. As to the protection of our frontiers, it would seem best to leave it to the people themselves, as has ever been the case, and if at any time the frontier men should be too hard pressed, they may be assisted by the midland militia; this will always secure us a hardy set of men on the frontiers, used to arms, and always ready to assist against invasions on other parts; whereas if they are protected by regulars, security will necessarily produce inattention to arms, and the whole of our people becoming disused to war, will render the curse of a standing army necessary. In this light the Indians may be considered as a useful people, for it is surely fortunate for a free people to be under some necessity of keeping the whole body acquainted with the use of arms. Should the fear of Indians in some measure check the settlement of that country, it can be no inconvenience to a people already inhabiting much too thinly the country they possess. Irregular settlers, I think, may be kept away, by timely and judicious proclamations of Congress, forbidding such practices, and peremptorily assuring that no titles shall ever follow such settlements; and perhaps, also, by having a few persons near the scene, authorized to give notice to all goers there, upon their first appearance. If the horrid evil of a standing army must be encountered, it is clear to me, that such forces had better be placed in judiciously chosen fortified places, to give protection to our own commerce, and that of foreigners. But I must confess, I would infinitely rather see this valuable purpose effected by the more safe and effectual measure of a navy, *which I sincerely hope will be the constant and unremitting object of Congressional attention;* and both the building and the manning of this navy should be as much as possible, dispersed throughout the thirteen states. With respect to trade, its combinations are so many, and so exclusive, that it is not easy to say much with propriety on that

subject hastily: but one thing, respecting that, is evident, it is, that the free nature and genius of commerce always requires as little restraint as possible, and that in young commercial states, to embarrass trade with heavy imposts, or other clogs, is effectually to demolish it. How grievously do I lament that this is fully and fatally the case in our ill-fated country. In our actual circumstances, it is difficult to meet and check effectually, the illiberal commercial conduct of the European states, except by counter and similar restraints; but the want of men and vessels, for the present, renders this difficult, if not impossible. A wise attention to the raising of seamen and building of ships, may in time cause these selfish states, to rue their selfish policy. Do you not think that it would be well for Congress, to regulate and bring to uniformity the business of weights and measures, throughout the United States, and also, to establish an uniformity in the value of coins; our country, in particular, is suffering great loss for want of the latter regulations. I am, dear sir, with great respect and esteem,

Your obedient servant,

RICHARD HENRY LEE.

NEW YORK, May 24th, 1786.

DEAR SIR—I have no excuse for having been so indifferent a correspondent, except that I had nothing to communicate to you, and I knew that of this you were apprised by your brother, Colonel Lee. Lately, however, we have received despatches from Mr. Adams, of a very interesting nature. He presented, some time about November last, a memorial to the ministry, requiring a delivery of the posts, and compensation for the infraction of the treaty respecting the negroes; to which he received for answer, "that it was unquestionably true, that, by the seventh article, the posts should have been evacuated; but that, by the fourth and ninth, it was also stipulated that there should be no legal impediment in the way of the recovery of British debts; that these articles had been violated by almost every state in the confederacy. Lord Carmarthen enumerates all the acts of the several states which militate against the treaty, with great precision, and finally states, that it would be folly for one party to carry its engagements into effect, while the other

neglected theirs; that, provided the United States would comply on their part, the king would on his." This, I think, is the amount of the despatch from Mr. Adams, from which the injunction of secrecy is removed, so that you may be under no restraint in your communications on the subject. We shall state it to the executive, for the information of the legislature. We have lately been much perplexed by a proposition from Connecticut, for ceding her claims to territory westward one hundred and twenty miles of the Pennsylvania line, by which she retains a right, by implication, to one hundred and twenty miles. We have been informed that she and Pennsylvania are on the point of variance with respect to Wioming, and that this land is necessary to satisfy the Susquehannah and Delaware companies of Connecticut, who create this mischief, whereby peace will be restored to the Union. We are also apprised, that, unless we accept this cession, Connecticut will open an office for the whole degree claimed by her, to the Mississippi, for sale. A proposition has been made reserving to the United States whatever they have acquired under the cession of Virginia, and negatived; and one confirming the decree of Trenton, or rather requiring that Connecticut should cede her claim to Pennsylvania, as therein decreed, met with the same fate; the latter as connected with the former, which, being negatived, gave a more pointed implication in favour of Connecticut; there it now stands. To-day it will be taken up again, and I suppose it will be passed. When shall we have the pleasure of seeing you here; you have, in a great degree, the friendship and good wishes of our family. Miss Shortwright and Mrs. Monroe desire to be most affectionately remembered to you. I shall always be happy to hear from you, and am sincerely your friend and servant,

JAMES MONROE.

KING GEORGE, April 4, 1783.

DEAR SIR—I am sorry my engagement to return immediately to Richmond, deprived me of the pleasure, or I should be happy to wait on you, to pay my respects to yourself and family, at Chantilly. It is with concern I hear you have thoughts of withdrawing from the service of your country.

If your guidance and direction of this state, through her difficulties, encompassed as she has been with those of every kind, hath hitherto been an object worthy your attention, certainly those arrangements which should take place upon the establishment of her sovereignty, as with respect to the order of the government, (if any change should be thought necessary,) as the enacting those laws which may be calculated to form and adapt the spirit and temper of the people to the degree, are equally important. These are, no doubt, objects of the utmost consequence, and as certainly as they are committed to the care of able and virtuous, or unskilful and designing men, will the people feel the good or bad effects, perhaps for ages to come. Many, who retain the prejudices of a monarchical education, many young men, just from school, and many without any education at all, now the day of difficulty is over, will be desirous of obtaining seats in the legislature; those who form the latter class, must act in subservience to men of talents, and whatever be the talents these young men may possess, they are neither calculated nor will they have the public confidence so far as to take the lead in the republic. Those elderly gentlemen, who, in addition to the acquirements of study, from the direction and management of our public affairs, during the contest, have become profoundly versed in the windings of the human heart, and in the affairs of government, not only possess the confidence of the people, but, in every view, are those who, upon the present occasion, should stand forth, and take the lead. They are without these prejudices, or the intemperate heat of youth, and as the state has grown up in her independence, under their honest care, in the arrangements they will propose, they will be guided by their wisdom, and the affections of a parent to its offspring; and, under their auspices, the people may expect such wholesome regulations as will make them ever bless the . . . of opposition and of independence. In the faithful and able part you have acted upon the late theatre, decisive and independent as you have been, you have not failed to make enemies, but the malignity of the people has not been able to effect the minds of the public who have looked on with deliberation, and assured by events of the eminent integrity and propriety of your conduct, have felt themselves more grateful and warmly interested in your favour, in proportion as these attacks have been more base and ungenerous. Believe me, your retreat from the public service is a matter which will not be lamented only by a partial part of the state, you will pardon the liberty I have

taken in joining the wishes of a citizen to those of a friend; and believe me to be, with great esteem and regard, very affectionately yours,

JAMES MONROE.

DANBURY, 23d September, 1778.

DEAR SIR—The bearer, Dr. Johnston, being delayed by a storm, I have time to own the receipt of your obliging letter, by Major Biggelow; lest that should not have been the case, I have desired Mr. Andrew Adams to show you my letter to him, for whom it was equally intended with himself. I look upon the present moments as the most critical to America of any that have passed since the war. If the enemy should succeed in a sudden and bold stroke upon the town and harbour of Boston, all their misfortunes are repaired, and our blooming prospects destroyed. If we take a decisive part, and arrive, with the army, in time, in the neighbourhood of Boston, we may make a glorious finishing of the war. Flour is the only article I dread the want of; I foresaw this in the very beginning of June, and wrote, the third of that month, to Congress, to press the immediate formation of a large magazine in the eastern states. When you consider, sir, that our army, the French fleet, the prisoners of war, and all the militia it may be necessary to call to defend our country, and our allies, are to be fed from one magazine, you will allow that it ought to be a large one, and collected in time; for all our sakes, move heaven and earth to the accomplishment of this one thing so necessary. It being a natural consequence of our alliance with France, that we ought fairly to assist each other with the most salutary counsels, I hope Congress will not neglect the opportunity which the late engagement of the Compte D'Etaing, with the French fleet, affords us, to show them our sincerity; the improper length of the ship-guns of the French, which renders that nation inferior to the English, when equal, and even superior, in every other respect, might be introduced, with great propriety, to the French ministry, without offending their pride, and it clearly appears from Maudil's handbill, how much England dreads such counsels. When you write to Mr. Arthur Lee, present him with my affectionate respects; when the campaign is finished, I shall answer his polite let-

ter in a manner, I hope, that will give him the utmost satisfaction. Remember me to all those you know to be friends, and believe me, with the truest attachment and regard,

Dear sir,

Your much obliged, humble servant,

HORATIO GATES.

Hon. Richard Henry Lee.

Letters from William Lee, Esquire, American Agent at the Court of Holland.

FRANKFORT, Germany, October 17, 1776.

R. H. Lee, Esq.

My dear Brother—I send you, with this, some magazines and Parliamentary registers of last session; my remote situation prevents me from sending you more things in this way, or the English papers; surely, you must get all these things from Paris, for though France and Great Britain have been some time at actual hostilities, yet, as there has not been any formal declaration, the communication between London and Paris, is as open as in time of profound peace. To what I have said to your committee, relative to the plan of a treaty with Holland, I will add, that, it is said, that the States General, in their grand meeting, since my meeting with Mr. D'Aneufville, have seriously deliberated about openly acknowledging the American independence. How the deliberation has ended, I have not been able to learn; however, it seems to me pretty clear, from what has been done, England will be precluded from getting any succours from Holland, either against us, or our ally France. The conduct of Spain is utterly inscrutible to us, at a distance, but from some hints, given me from England, I judge, that there is a trial of skill between the English and Spanish ministry, who shall outwit the other, in negotiation; the latter demand the cession of Gibraltar as the price of their neutrallty, which the former flatter themselves with obtaining; while they are taking as much precaution as their strength will admit, to secure it, and, with great assiduity, they insinuate Lord Mansfield's jesuitical argument, that your independence will be a dangerous precedent for the Spanish possessions in America. The Spaniards must soon, I think, see that the English ministry are imposing on them, for they are, in general, a

solid and clear-sighted people. They wish too, that America should give them the Floridas; perhaps, it would not be unwise to agree to their having St. Augustine, with a large district around it, upon their agreeing to allow us a free navigation of the Mississippi, provided they have so little sense as to desire St. Augustine. This I mean only on the supposition that they join us openly, if Great Britain should foolishly continue the war through another year. This measure, I am told, they think of being buoyed up by a few captures made on the French commerce; and, in that case, Lord Howe is to return to the command in chief; but you may form a pretty decided opinion on that head yourself, by the issue of the present campaign in America, by sea and land. If the British forces are successful, the war will continue; if they are beaten, Great Britain will be anxious for peace; in which business, the opposition will give the ministry all the trouble they can, particularly Lord ——, and his tres petite party, for his Lordship has latterly shown himself to the world, what I always thought him, a worthless and wicked character. The ministry, however, can carry any thing through Parliament that they please, for the king of Great Britain may now say, with the European monarchs, *sic volo, sic jabeo.* With respect to Germany, the campaign has ended without any thing material or decisive having passed. The military abilities of the king of Prussia, and his brother, Prince Henry, still shine conspicuous, though the emperor and his generals have obtained as much as they could have expected, which was to prevent the Prussians from wintering in Bohemia. The king of Prussia is to winter in Silesia, and Prince Henry in Saxony. The political negotiations are becoming very violent; both the emperor and the king of Prussia, have called on all the empire, at the general Diet, to join them, but the members assembled in the Diet, have not yet taken part with either side. The electorate of Hanover has greatly increased its army to upwards of twenty thousand men; the king of Prussia expects to have them on his side, and the emperor hopes to keep them neuter. In this situation, neither can, with prudence, take part with us openly; but 'tis expected, by the spring, some certain system will be formed, when we may see our way clearer than at present, for which purpose, I wait here as a central and neutral place, to watch the first favourable opening of advancing the interests of America. There is no speaking with certainty, but to me it seems probable that our connexion with Austria will take place before it will with Prus-

sia, and, perhaps, the former will be more advantageous than the latter.

I am greatly obliged to you for the papers containing the Congress proceedings, relative to the British acts of Parliament, which gave infinite pleasure, and has confirmed the high opinion which this part of the world entertained of their wisdom and firmness. It will be of considerable service if you keep me well informed of what passes with you, and particularly furnish me, early, with authentic accounts of the military operations, whether favourable or unfavourable.

I see by Mr. Timothy Dean's letter to his brother Silas, in France, which was intercepted by the English, and published in the London papers, that Governor Henry told him, a land office would soon be opened for the sale of back lands in Virginia. This appears to me an important business, and should not be entered upon hastily. They will certainly sell higher, and settle faster at the end of the war. I am sorry that the first mode of fixing the proportion of each state's contribution to the general fund, by the number of souls in each state, has been changed to that of the value of land in each state. The first mode was certainly the fairest and best for all; but Mr. J. A. says, it was the southern people who insisted on this alteration, particularly F. L. L.

I have considered the subject of taxation with considerable attention; and from seeing the vicious mode practised in almost every part of Europe, I am convinced, that unless trifling taxes on luxuries may be necessary for the regulation of commerce, a poll tax, on low land, will be ever found the most equitable, the easiest collected, and the most productive of nett revenue. I should, therefore, be happy to find such a mode adopted, and continued, in Virginia.

As to this country (Germany) the poor are miserable; but still it is full of manufacturers useful for America, whose productions will find a profitable market there, and therefore there must be a great connexion between the two countries. This is a disagreeable country to live in, particularly Vienna, which is five times as extravagant as either Paris or London. The language is difficult to learn, and when learnt, is horrible to speak.

Our sincere love and affection attend you and yours.

Farewell. Your's, &c.

WILLIAM LEE.

AUGUST 15, 1780.

MY DEAR BROTHER—As we have not heard from you since you sailed,* our earnest wishes for your safety makes us hope, that you are now safe arrived; and hope you will not lose any time, in obtaining from the state of Virginia, a remittance for the freight of goods, sent by the Livingston, last year. There is lately arrived at Bordeaux, one hundred hogsheads of tobacco, belonging to the state, and consigned to ..... & Co.; but no order for the payment of this freight, or for any part of the goods. Thus a house, that never did, and never can, if it were willing, advance one shilling for the state, is in possession of large funds belonging to the state, while those who have served it, and advanced their money, are left in the lurch.

In the place you have left, things seem to go on as they did, and the old man seems to have taken up his line, and treats the peaceable minister with as much, or more indifference, than before. The most trifling things are concealed from him, so as to give a general idea of his insignificance. It may be of use to us to know, that the Countess of Scarborough sold at Dunkirk for very near one hundred thousand livres; the Serapis, being so fine a ship, was, no doubt, sold for a million at least. Count D'Estaing has gone to Cadiz, to take command of the allied fleet, which probably will not be able to join the ships at Brest this season; as the English fleet by this time, forty line of battle ships strong, cruising off cape Finisterre and Corunna.

The Russian fleet of thirteen ships, is arrived at the Texel, and the Dutch fleet is nearly ready for sea. The northern league between Holland, Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, is agreed on, which is the most fatal blow to the English domination on the high seas, which they have experienced this century; and must finally, in spite of all their blunders, past and present, give victory to their enemies. Virginia and North Carolina must prepare for a violent shock, as the force of the enemy is ordered to be divided between those states, next fall, winter and spring, unless Clinton should have work enough cut out for him about New York.

To aid this plan, the tories in England, at least the intriguing characters among them that came from North Carolina, Virginia and Maryland, are ordered back, and to submit to the pre-

* This was written to Arthur Lee, Esq. but has reference to the public concerns of the day.

sent government there, that they may serve as spies to the army, and create dissension and distraction by their intrigues among the people. The shock occasioned by the taking of Charleston, which was ten times greater than it otherwise would have been, from the publication of that vile forgery of a letter, from Clinton to Lord G. G. has pretty well gone over, and our friends in Europe seem as confident as ever, but pray discourage the repetition of such a dirty practice, for it is too base for any but our enemies to use. The riots in England are ended, with about four or five thousand people killed by the soldiery, forty or fifty hung, Lord G. Gordon still in the tower, and houses, &c. burnt to the value of above one million sterling. The city of London, and most parts of the kingdom, thank the king for using military, instead of civil law, so that a revolution similar to the last in Denmark, in its essential points, seems to have taken place in England, where the king is happy, having become absolute. The people in Ireland seem still determined to support their rights, though their Parliament has become latterly as complaisant as that in England.

You have the best love of all here, and we desire you to present our affectionate love to all friends with you. Adieu.

WILLIAM LEE.

SOUTH CAROLINA CORRESPONDENCE.

PHILADELPHIA, June 8th, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I had the honour of addressing you under the 1st instant. From that day to our yesterday's adjournment, we have made no progress in the treasury business, nor in our foreign affairs—none at all. This morning is appointed for resuming the latter. Mr. Deane sent a letter yesterday, which he intimates will be his last: he requests an adjustment of his expenses; and, if I remember right, his salary—the letter was committed to the board of treasury. Colonel Wadsworth has laid before Congress an alarming state of his department, and again declares his intention to resign. No less alarming is an explanation from the board of war, respecting essential articles within their sphere. America trusts to . . . . and . . . . to the chapter of accidents; that mere accident which lately happened in South Carolina, will prove an excellent interposition in our favour—we shall turn t'other side, and go to sleep again. Enclosed with this you will receive a letter which Mr. Lovell delivered me yesterday; I suppose it came by the post; and also Dunlap's paper of this morning.

I am, with very great esteem and regard,
Dear sir, your obedient and humble servant,
HENRY LAURENS.

The Hon. RICHARD HENRY LEE, Esq.
Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, June 22d, 1779.

DEAR SIR—Since my last of the 8th instant, I am become debtor for your favours of the 6th and 13th. I am mortified by my inability to make proper returns by the present mail; but circumstances render it impracticable. I shall seek for a private hand, or perhaps a public messenger in a day or two

may offer, by whom I may pay my respects, and be almost as early with you as this will be.

We have not yet gained an hair's breadth up the hill of appreciation, nor shall we be able to roll that stone without the immediate interposition of those for whom we have been long labouring in vain. I shall take the liberty of enlarging on this head in my next. I believe as you do, referring to an intended publication, you may remember I intimated the apprehension while you were here, and told you whence it sprung. As to the hearing and open door, I believe it would be a proper means had we proper men; but, alas! one may almost now exclaim with Elijah, "and Lord, I alone of all thy prophets am left." If the conduct of the man had been clear, he would have demonstrated his purity long since. His publication cannot make a clean thing come forth of an unclean. Remember his own criterion for the character of a public minister—but there is the Remora to my process, Colonel Knaublanch and two bran new foreigners, both recommended to me, by particular friends. Dunlap's paper will accompany this, to which I beg leave to refer, and to conclude by repeating, that I remain,

Dear Sir, with very great esteem and affection,
Your obedient, and most humble servant,
HENRY LAURENS.

The Hon. Richard Henry Lee,
Virginia.

PHILADELPHIA, 31st August, 1779.

My Dear Sir—Since the date of my last trouble, the 24th instant, I have been honoured with your favours of the 13th and 23d; the former by an express messenger, who assured me, he should not return till this day, but I learned last night at Mr. Lovell's, that he went off suddenly on Sunday. Yesterday I received at Congress, two packets and one small letter, directed to you, these I apprehend came by the eastern post; at Mr. Lovell's request, I shall send them to him, to be forwarded in a proper manner. I am sorry to find you continue an invalid, but how can it be otherwise, if you also continue to fatigue both body and mind. You must not allow the attempts and designs of wicked men, to operate in the very manner they would wish; let us proceed fairly, and softly, and wisely, and truth will drive them out of their entrenchments, they are now closely hemmed in, and cannot escape. On Tuesday last, at the reading of a letter from A.

Lee, Esq. I moved to commit that letter, together with Mr. Lee's vindication, to a special committee; besides the reason of the thing, I grounded my motion on a commitment of a late memoir from Mr. Deane, a copy of which you will receive herewith. You will give this performance a more proper name. The motion was laboriously opposed, and in C. T's. language; after some time spent in debate, ousted by a motion for adjournment. On some day since Tuesday, a report from the treasury was taken up, recommending a warrant to issue for ten thousand dollars, to the Hon. S. D. Esq., in full for his expenses from the 4th June, 1778. I opposed the payment of that, or any other sum to Mr. Deane, until he should account for the large sums of public money which have been in his hands. The question was put, shall ten thousand stand? lost; motion to insert fifteen thousand? question lost; to insert twelve thousand? lost; to insert ten thousand five hundred? carried, even by voices who were against ten thousand, *or any sum*, because they were worried, and had been worried; this deficiency of firmness and perseverence, is the source of much irregularity and much evil in public business. The yeas and nays were called for in every stage, and finally upon the resolutions; I reflect with pleasure, that I stand uniformly through the whole. A question was asked of the treasury, has Mr. Deane given in an account of his expenses? Artfully replied to, by a gentleman who had formerly given proofs of his abilities in answering interrogations, *not a regular one! not a regular one!* This gentleman perfectly well knew, that Mr. Deane had given in a very minute *one*, amounting to 29,000 dollars, and upwards; he also knew the artifice which had been practised by one of his colleagues at the board, to repossess Mr. Deane of a paper, which he discovered, could not be crammed down the throats even of the treasury. I had seen that account, and had been promised a copy of it, but, as I am informed, Mr. Deane, the very next morning, acted a high passion of offence at so shameful a demand, and his zeal for the public good, carried him rather beyond the tone of prudence; he ordered that the account should be immediately carried back to the demandant, with a declaration that Congress would allow no such accounts. As Mr. Deane has not judged it proper to return that, or any other, 'tis not to be doubted but that a gentleman of Mr. Deane's candour, now regrets his rashness in parting with the original. I received this relation from one of those worthy friends, who sincerely wish to see right done, but who will not encounter trouble necessary to accomplish right. I shall endeavour to trace this

matter to its source, and possibly the whole House will be informed of it. Saturday last a letter from Mr. William Lee, accompanied by his vindication, was brought into Congress, but the "order of the day" laid those papers asleep, yesterday an attempt was made to keep them out of hearing a little longer; I complained heavily of the innovation, and after much debate, they were in part read: the House grew thin, and at length only eight states being present, adjourned. I believe I am wrong, William Lee's papers were read, those from Arthur Lee were not. My colleague Mr. Drayton, had been confined to his bed some three weeks past. When I had learned that he was really ill, I could not refrain from visiting him, his permission being previously obtained. When I approached his bed, he clasped my hand and wept affectingly; after recovering his voice, he signified great satisfaction at seeing me, and particularly requested I would write a state of his case to Mrs. Drayton. The physicians think him dangerously ill, say he may live one or two weeks longer, that if he has strength for the discharge from an abscess in his side, they shall raise him again, but that he will remain an invalid several months. Upon Mr. Drayton's recovery, or upon the arrival of another colleague, my continuance here partly depends; but I am much inclined to return homeward in the course of the next month. I believe I shall have the honour of waiting on you, before the first of October. Finances as they were. News from Penobscot very unfavourable, but no particulars. I would compound for the loss of all our ships, provided the soldiers and sailors escape capture. Dunlap's paper of this morning, will present Rowland some intelligence. I beg, sir, you will present my compliments to your brother; I shall have much to say to both you and him, when I have the happiness of meeting you, deferring to that time will be the best. Many clouds will in the mean time pass away, and subjects in embryo be matured. I remain, with sincere esteem and respect,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

PHILADELPHIA, September 28th, 1779.

DEAR SIR—I have not had the pleasure of writing to you since the 14th instant. Yesterday I was honoured with your favour of the 12th and 19th. You have quite mistaken the motive for "committing for consideration;" the motion was

made by a very sincere friend of yours; he had entertained hopes of bringing before the House a proper report; a tolerable one was prepared, received, and read, and Monday 12th or 14th, I forget which, "set apart" for considering it in the House; but, although repeatedly called for, its unpleasantness, I apprehend, proved a bar against taking it up. Your friend did not think it quite perfect; he had, therefore, prepared certain amendments, which he would have brought on the book, and I will still endeavour to make the whole appear to public view. You shall be particularly informed in due time. You will have heard before this day of Count d'Estaing's arrival near Charleston, South Carolina; that operations against the enemy at Beaufort and Savannah, were in hand. I expect every hour to learn some important event in that quarter; probably the first intelligence will be brought by the count himself, who may be daily expected at Sandy Hook or Rhode Island. Our commander in chief is properly authorized to co-operate vigorously with him. The season of the year was much against the forces of our ally to the southward. A few days easterly winds, with autumnal rains, would blast our prospect; but I hope the weather has favoured them.

Enclosed herein you will find a general account of three days' work; it will be an exceedingly painful task to recite by and by the particulars. I shall make no comment. I have acted one uniform and consistent part, dictated by conscience for the good of my country, as well as for doing justice to a meritorious individual. My wishes are not accomplished; but, I am nevertheless persuaded the day will come, when that injured individual will receive both justice and honour from his country. By the next post I shall determine whether to leave Philadelphia this winter; and you shall, if I determine to go, be informed precisely the day. At present, time will not permit me to pay that respect to your favours now before me, which is due. I must hasten to the square room, where I often meet many crooked things. I pray God to bless you; and entreat you to be assured that I continue, with sincere respect and esteem,

Dear sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

HENRY LAURENS.

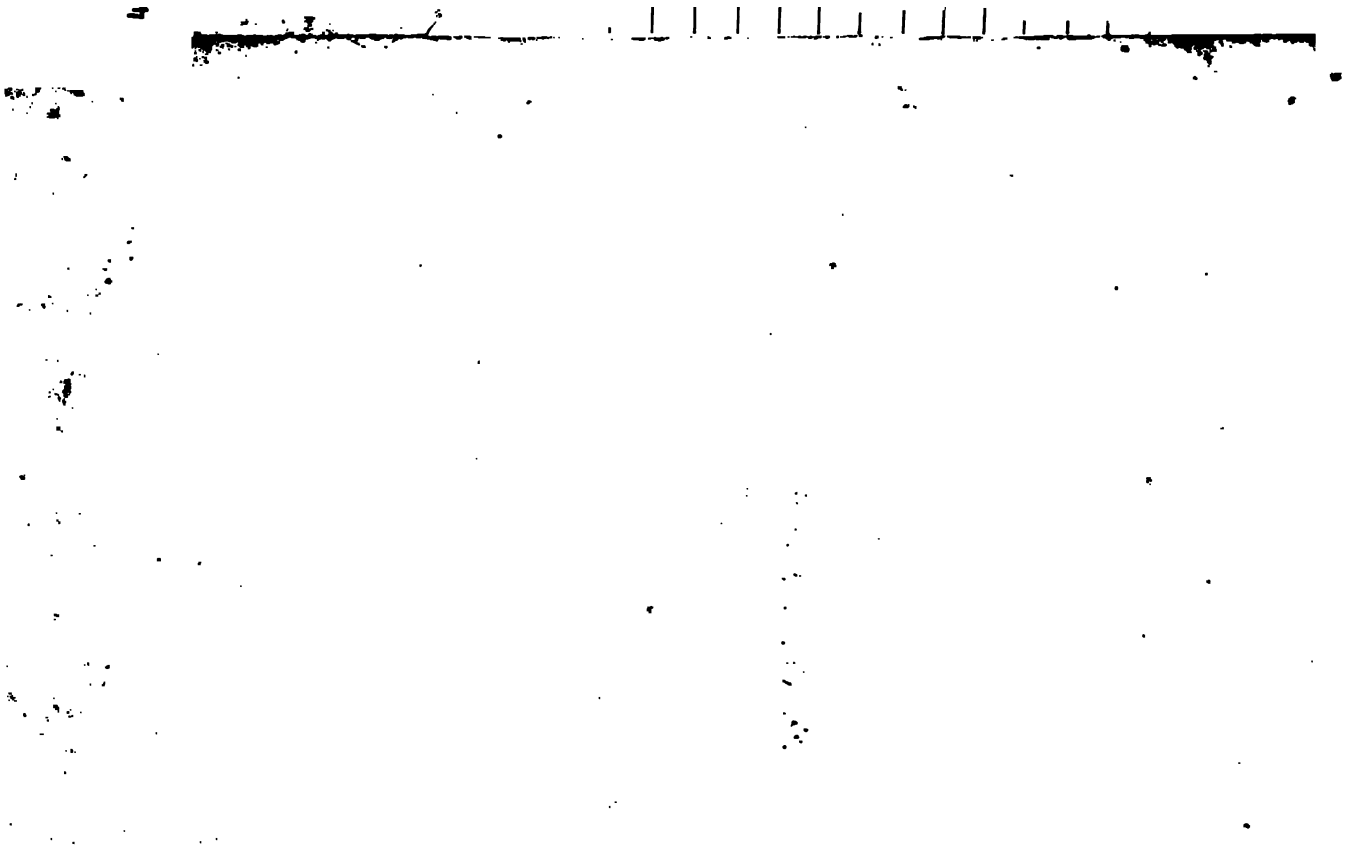
The Hon. Richard Henry Lee, Esq.
Virginia.

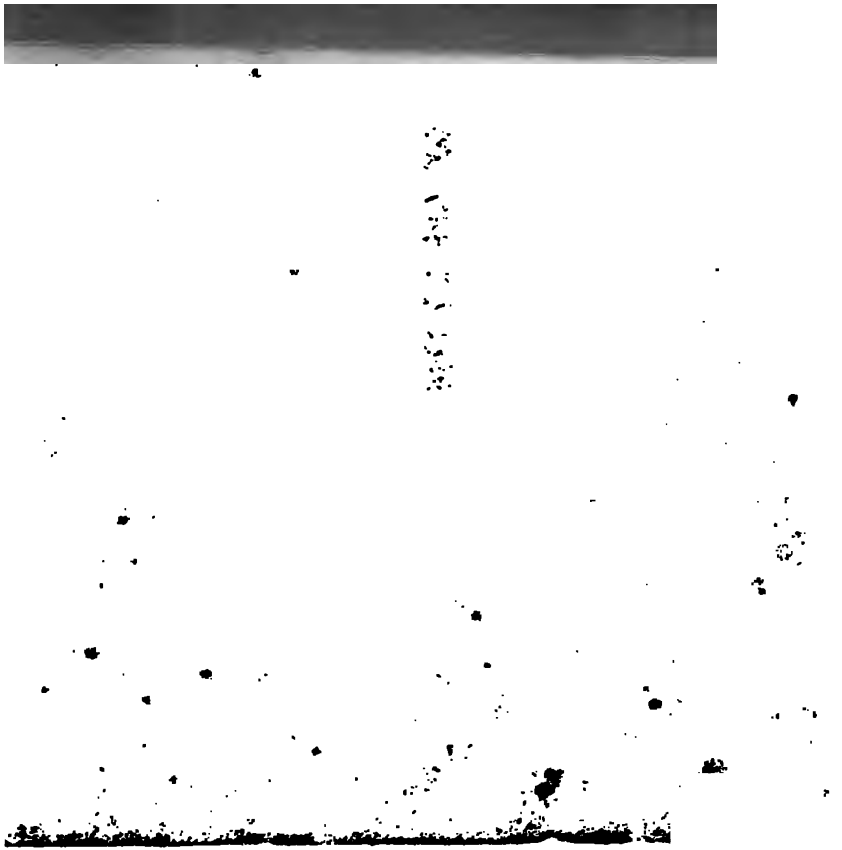
P. S. We have advices to be relied on, that the second division of Arbuthnot's squadron, seven ships of war, having under convoy transports, containing about four thousand

troops, arrived this day sevennight at New York. The troops are said to be "wild Irish" and Hessians; the term "wild Irish" is repeated in several letters.

Twelve o'clock. A circumstance has just happened, which renders a transmission of the paper intended to have been enclosed, with certain comments on it, inconsistent with my honour. Therefore I have withdrawn it.

THE END.





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